

Zulfiqar Ali Kalhoro



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Apart from Islamic architecture and art, he has also written several articles on Sufism, Jaina, Hindu and Sikh heritage of Pakistan. His most recent research has been on concept of hero in colonial Sindh and identity of Udasis in Sindh. His recent book "Memorial Stones – Tharparkar (2017) deals with Sati and hero worship in Tharparkar.

Archaeology, Art and Religion in Sindh

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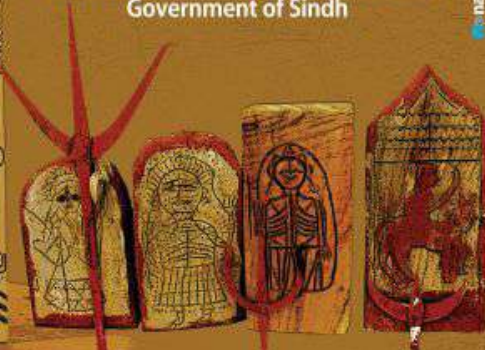
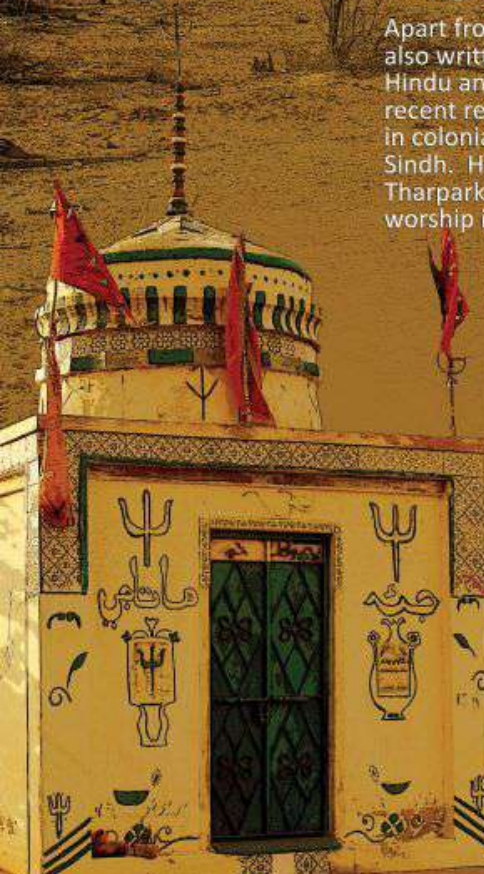


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**Culture and Tourism Department,
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**Dedicated to my mother, Sahib Khatoon
(1935-1980)**

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book could not have been possible without the help of many close acquaintances. First of all, I am indebted to Mr. Abdul Hamid Akhund of Endowment Fund Trust for Preservation of the Heritage who provided timely financial support to restore and conduct research on megaliths of Thohar Kanarao. I wish to thank Naseer Mirza who provided me information and books for two of the articles on Imam Mahdi. I am equally grateful to Sohbo Khan Jamali who introduced me to many Jats of Digano and Bakhar Jamali when I was doing M.Phil research on camel art. Two of the papers on Jats have been extracted from my M.Phil dissertation. Mr. Sobho Khan Jamali was of great help indeed. I also benefitted from the help of Anbji Jago and his son Panchraj Singh Jago of Hariyar village who provided most of the information about Malhan Devi and Hario Jago. I am also grateful to my friend Gul Hasan Kalmati for his help in writing article on human and environmental threats to Karachi.

The list of acknowledgments would not be complete without mention of my family and dear friends who constantly encouraged me and lifted my morale in many ways and this helped me to complete this book. I am thankful to my wife who stood by me on every occasion and provided the much needed inspiration to successfully finalize this arduous work and encouraged to pursue my research on Sindh. I feel grateful to my good friend Muhammad Juman Zardari who sometimes accompanied in the field. Finally my word of appreciation for Sohail Ahmed who diligently undertook to proofread and edit the manuscript.

Preface and Acknowledgements

This book comes out of my ongoing research that I have been doing on religion and art in Sindh since 2000. The journey that I undertook to study Sindhi syncretism, asceticism and mysticism led me to focus on those dimensions which were not investigated earlier. My anthropological pursuits broadened my horizon and gave me impetus to write more on these hitherto unknown aspects of Sindhi culture and religion.

Sindh's rich cultural and religious diversity makes it unique in Pakistan. In past few decades, there has been a growing interest in the archaeology of Sindh by both local and international scholars. There has been a welcome shift from the international scholars and researchers' work upon which we solely relied upon to especially national local Sindhi scholars who have been contributing in English language and bringing hitherto unknown tangible and intangible heritage of Sindh to international limelight. This trend has facilitated young archaeologists and anthropologists to explore the hidden treasures of Sindh. The present book is also one in the series on those hidden and unknown cultural and religious diversity that Sindh has been celebrating since ages. It is a collection of articles dealing with archaeology, art and religion in Sindh which I have discussed in detail in the introduction.

I have sincerely endeavored to provide information in the papers that I collected over a period of time. This

written on history of Jats in Sindh but not much is available on their folklore and art. In this book two articles, based on primary sources, deal with art, culture and folklore of Jats. The author has also touched upon the lesser known but important religious communities in his book. This includes Veer nathi Panth, a panth which has not earlier been discussed by any of the researchers and scholars. Veer nathi panth is believed to have been named after Veer Nath who lived in the sixteenth century Sindh, first mentioned in his poetry by eminent Sindhi Sufi poet Shah Inayat. The Risalo of Shah Abdul Latif is full of references to Nath Jogis for which Shah has used several titles to refer to them. Shah Abdul Latif has devoted two whole *surs* Ramkali and Khahori exclusively to the Nath Jogis and there are also some references in other *surs* of the Risalo. The article by Dr. Kalhoro is very useful in understanding the history and development of Veer nathi order. He also throws light on his various disciples who spread Veer nathi Panth in Sindh, Punjab, Gujrat and Rajasthan. There is also an interesting and useful material on the sacred typology of Hariyar village in Tharparkar.

I hope this book will be useful and equally important addition to the existing cultural treasures of Sindh and for the students of anthropology, archaeology, history, art history, literature and comparative religions on one hand and for the general reader on other.

Ghulam Akbar Laghari
Secretary to Govt of Sindh
Culture, Tourism and Antiquities Department

Publisher's Note

The Culture Department, Government of Sindh has been promoting and preserving Sindh's culture and heritage with dedication through a number of activities. In recent years, the Department has intensified its activities to promote and highlight Sindh's culture through multiple cultural events including seminars, workshops, conferences, cultural programs and festivals. A frequent holding of these cultural events has made Culture Department one of the most sustainable and vibrant amongst the provincial culture departments of the rest of the provinces in Pakistan. Apart from organizing regular cultural events, Culture Department also publishes books on history, language and literature, Sufism, heritage and culture of Sindh in Sindhi, Urdu and English languages. The present book written by an eminent anthropologist Dr. Zulfiqar Ali Kalhoro is the latest edition in the series of documentation of Sindh's history and heritage that this department is doing for posterity. Dr. Kalhoro's book deals with some of the most important dimensions of Sindh's archaeology, art and religion. One of the uniqueness of the book is its focus on hitherto unknown heritage sites including one on Megaliths in Karachi. We have already Indus period sites in Karachi district but the discovery of and discussions on megaliths in Karachi reflect how rich the region of Karachi was in the ancient times. Moreover, the author has also delineated similar types of monuments in other provinces in the country. Something has already been

Cult practices hosted by South-West University Neofit Rilski University Research Center for Ancient European and Eastern Mediterranean Cultures at Blagoevgrad, 12-15 October 2016. The symposium was attended by the renowned archaeologists, anthropologists, historians and heritage managers from across the globe. The subject of megaliths is entirely new in the archaeological annals of Sindh. In this paper I have only discussed megaliths in Karachi which I extracted from my forthcoming book on ‘*Megalithic Sindh*’, a book that deals extensively with different types of megaliths in Sindh. Megaliths have been found in other parts of Pakistan too but those in Sindh are totally unknown to archaeologists, anthropologists and historians to this day. Many different types of megaliths have been discussed in my forthcoming book on megalithic Sindh which include dolmens, stone circles, stone circular structures, stone alignments, menhirs. During my exploration and documentation of megaliths in Sindh, I came across many large stone circles and stone alignments some of which were in very bad state of preservation. One of the stone circles was restored to its original condition with the financial help from Endowment Fund Trust for the Preservation of the Heritage of Sindh (EFT).

Another paper “Human and Environmental threats to *Chaukhandi* and role of civil society” was presented in a conference at Istanbul. I have discussed the human and environmental threats to *Chaukhandi tombs* and the kind of role civil society can play to safeguard them. We know that many of the scholars and art lovers are only familiar with *Chaukhandi tombs* which are located in Karachi. A few people know that *Chaukhandi tombs* are distributed throughout length and breadth of Sindh from Makhi, Mol, Malir, Moidan, Maher to Mal Maari valleys. I have

Introduction

Sindh is a land of mystics, mysteries, myths, and monuments. Almost every village and town has history to boast legendary values, tribes to tell myths of their origin, religious groups to mirror the unique social transformation, peculiarities and distinctive features to celebrate and artisans to carry forward centuries old artistic traditions. While travelling through the cultural landscape of Sindh, one comes across both prehistoric and historic monuments which have withstood the vagaries of weather narrating the tales of culturally rich bygone past of Sindh. Many a monuments are now important part of history.

This book is a collection of 9 articles dealing with broader themes of archaeology, art and religion. Some of the articles were published earlier in national and international journals which were not accessible to Pakistani scholars who are working on the history, anthropology, archaeology and religion of Sindh. Four of these presented in the international conferences have also been included in the book. These include Megaliths in Karachi, Human and Environmental threats to *Chaukhandi tombs* and role of civil society Karachi, Depiction of Imam Mahdi in Sindhi poetry and Role of Holy Shrines and Spiritual Arts in People’s Education about Mahdism. Last two papers were presented in the conferences in Tehran. Likewise, two other papers notably “Megaliths in Karachi” was presented in Second International Symposium on Megalithic Monuments and

The temple of Veer Nath is located at Ratokot in the district of Sanghar. We know that Sindh has been land of Naths, Puris, Giris, Udasis, Bharatis etc, all renouncers belonging to different renunciatory orders within ascetism. It is an introductory type of write-up furnishing very basic information on Nath ascetics in general and *Veernathi sampradaya* in particular.

Another article, which is the last article in the book, is about typology of sacred spaces in Hariyar village in Tharparkar. Many sacred spaces associated with Hindu deities, deified heroes, *satis* and ascetics have been discussed in the book.

This book will be equally important for anthropologists, archaeologists, art historians, and students of comparative religions. Most of the topics have never been focused or discussed earlier. This makes the book different from earlier published material on Sindh.

documented more than one hundred such graveyards where there are stone-carved graves, popularly known as *Chaukhandi* and *Rumi* tombs. A lot has already been written on *Chaukhandi* tombs highlighting different dimensions be they pictorial, floral, geometric designs, provenance or symbols etc. Many scholars believe that majority of the tombs belong to Baloch tribes which is not true as my research is contrary to what has been claimed by these scholars. I have delineated in my forthcoming book “Tombs and Tribes: New Perspectives on Chaukhandi Art in Sindh” that the majority of *Chaukhandi* tombs belong to Sindhi tribes, be they Burfats, Barejas, Balharas, Palejas, Palaris, Jokhias, Jakhras and many others. I have discussed the tribal association of tombs in my forthcoming book. Due to indifferent attitude of concerned authorities, the *Chaukhandi tombs* are in process of gradual decay slab by slab. I have discussed in the paper some human and environmental threats that *Chaukhandi tombs* face today.

Two articles namely Jat Culture and Camel art have been extracted from my M.Phil dissertation in Anthropology. Both articles give first hand information about culture and art of Jat community in Bakhar Jamali and surrounding villages in Matiari district. There are very interesting theories of origin about Jats of Sindh. A lot has been written on the history of Jat community, but hardly anything is available on their art and culture. Both articles provide new insight into the Jat community's culture and art. I hope that both the articles will also provide a springboard for further research on their art and culture.

Two other articles deal with religious diversity in Sindh. The first one is about the *Veernathi panth* in Sindh which is believed to have been founded by Veer Nath.

run-off through Desoi, Dawoo, Darwat and other torrents during the periods of intensive rain (Mirjat et al 2011: 104). The main hill torrents that traverse the landscape of Thana Bula Khan Tehsil are Baran, Desoi, Drigh, Loyachh, Morai and Mol (Kalhor 2011:141).

Mol Town, which derives its name from the Mol Nai, is also very rich in archaeological sites. The Mol, starting from a height of 2,000 feet, continues to flow southward until it unites with Khadeji, and the combined stream, well-known as the “Malir”, falls into the sea by way of the Ghizri Creek, a little distance east of Karachi (Lambrick 1986:45). On both banks of the Mol Nai, a large number of ancient settlement sites, rock-art sites, megalithic structures and pre-Islamic and Islamic Period tombs are located. One also finds a large number of *gabarbands* (ancient dams) in the various tributaries of the Mol Nai.

Description of the Sites

There are two circular pit graves that were illegally shoved by the local people in the hope of finding some treasure. Both graves are located about 10 km north of Mol Town between the two *nais* - Mol and Drigh (Fig. 1). The Nai Drigh is a tributary of the Mol Nai. There are many menhirs and stone alignments near both *nais*. I will give my observations about both sites in the text that follows.

Bapro Rek Buthi

This *buthi* (hill) is located on the right bank of the Drigh Nai (Fig. 2). The *buthi* is fifteen metres in height. The whole *buthi* is covered with graves from the Pre-Islamic Period which are oriented eastwest. On the

Prehistoric Circular Tombs In Mol Valley, Sindh-Kohistan

Introduction

This paper is about the discovery of prehistoric stone circular tombs in Mol Valley which I found during the survey of the megaliths and rock art sites in the Kohistan region of Sindh. The circular structures had been illegally dug by treasure-hunters. In this paper, I will present my observations on these historical burial sites. Moreover, I also interviewed the diggers to find out the original architecture of these circular tombs. The information about the graves' goods and the positions of the dead bodies in these graves was also collected from the tomb-raiders.

The Sindh-Kohistan region, located between the main hilly ranges of Balochistan and the Indus alluvial plains, is a scattered low-lying hilly area with gravelly soil that was covered at some time with alluvial soil suitable for the purpose of cultivation and an alluvium-rich valley. The main hilly sequences of Sindh Kohistan are Lakhi, Kambhu, Badhar, Bhit and Dumbar (Quddus 1992:197).

Thana Bula Khan, a tehsil of District Jamshoro, is the main town in Sindh-Kohistan. The drainage slope of hill torrents in the area is towards Baran Nai. Most of the catchments of Thana Bula Khan collect the surplus of

resembles the one found on the Bapro Rek Buthi. It is also a circular pit grave (Fig.7). The depth of the circular pit grave is about 1.5 metres with a diameter of two metres. The stone circular grave was five feet high. The interior of the grave is aligned with dressed stones of unequal size and form. Interestingly, hammer marks are visible on the outer faces of the stone slabs. Moreover, one finds three cupules on a dislodged slab of the tomb (Fig. 8). The cupules appear to be associated with funerary rituals. Bull terracotta figurines and small pottery vessels were also found inside this grave. I was only shown the pottery vessels (Figs. 9 & 10) which also seem to belong to the Kot Dijian Period.

Similar stone circular graves are also found near the Chakhari Nai which is also a tributary of the Mol Nai.

I have seen several such stone circular structures in the valleys of Maher, Tiko Baran, Belli Thap and Taung in Sindh (Fig. 11). A few stone circular structures have also been found in the Rek Valley in Thana Bula Khan Tehsil. Some stone circular structures also exist in the Gaj and Nali Valleys, with the largest stone circular structure seen at Rohel Ji Kund in the Gaj Valley (Fig. 12).

Conclusion

Stone circular structures are known to the scholars who are working in Sindh, but none of the scholars have been able to figure out when these were built. Only Fairservis, who studied similar circular structures in Las Bela and Makran, Balochistan, correlated these structures to death rituals. He has given their dates to be between 1400 BC and 1800 AD. However, the illegal excavation

northern side of the hill a stone circular structure is located which was illegally dug by the local people (Fig. 3). Both the interior and the exterior of the grave are circular in shape (Fig. 4). According to the grave diggers, it was a stone circular structure standing six feet tall and had an entrance which opened to the east. One may believe the information of the diggers that it was circular structure as the lower slabs of the stone circular structures are still visible which indicate that the information provided by the diggers is correct.

The interior walls of the graves have dress-stone slabs laid one on top of the other. According to the tomb-raiders, the burial rite was flexed, with body interred in a fetal position. The small pottery vessels and bull terracotta figurines were placed near the head of the skeletal remains. To the south of the circular graves three standing menhirs are located (Fig. 5). The central menhir is taller than the others. The height of the central menhir is ten feet. The flanking menhirs are smaller and their heights are three and six feet respectively. Near these menhirs are also located a few circular structures of which one has been excavated. Nothing was found in this circular structure. However, pottery vessels were found from the larger stone circular structures which at first glance seem to be from the Kot Dijian culture.

Shaikhani Buthi

This *buthi* (hill) is located 500 metres west of Bapro Rek. The height of this *buthi* is about eight metres. At its foothill, a few graves which are oriented east-west can be seen. On top of the hill a circular pit grave which has also been illegally excavated, is seen (Fig. 6). This

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over the years has exposed that the true objective of these stone circular structures was that they were burial sites. The illegal digging of the graves also provides some clue about the shape of the graves and the pieces of pottery found in the graves. No lithic material or pottery was found on the surface of either of the hills. The pottery vessels were only found inside the graves and this pottery seems to belong to Kot Dijian Period (3200-2800 B.C.) (Personal communication with J. Mark Kenoyer refers). Several similar pottery vessels were found in the graves which suggest that these graves should not be seen in isolation. There are a few Kot Dijian settlement sites in Sindh-Kohistan. However, the main Kot Dijian settlement site can be seen on Kohtrash Buthi and Phang which was first investigated by Majumdar (1934) and later by Flam (1981). Several other prehistoric structures such as *gababands* have also been studied by Flam and Harvey (1993) who have confirmed them to be of the Kot Dijian Period. One can argue on the basis of the pottery vessels and the existence of prehistoric structures and sites that these stone circular structures may belong to the Kot Dijian Period. However, the presence of menhirs near the stone circular structures also provides an additional clue that the site of Bapro Rek was later occupied by people in the Iron Age.

Malir, Mol, Taung, Maal Mari, Jungshahi, Johi, Sehwan and Thohar Kanaro. They can also be found in Mithi and Nagarparkar regions of Tharparkar. Nobody earlier reported the discovery of large number of megaliths in the above-mentioned regions of Sindh (Kalhor 2014).

Menhirs in Karachi are engraved with cupules and rock carvings. A few menhirs with cupules are also found in Thana Bula Khan which I discovered in 2014. Moreover, engraved menhirs are also found in Jungshahi area in Thatta district. I also discovered menhirs with cupules in Nagarparkar in year 2015.

Interestingly, the megaliths in Sindh contain cupules and engravings. There are several such megalithic structures in Thana Bula Khan and Johi which contain petroglyphs. However, the most interesting megaliths are found in Karachi which includes menhirs, stone circles, stone alignments/rows and dolmens. Cupules have been found in some of these megaliths.

Megaliths are venerated in Thana Bula Khan tehsil in Jamshoro district. The people of Barija tribe slaughter a goat and spray its blood on menhir when there is no rain in the village. The menhir is invoked to bring rain. Likewise, people of Kanra tribe of Mol also worship these megaliths and believe that these sacred spaces were made by their ancestors who introduced Islam in Sindh-Kohistan region of Sindh.

However, I will discuss below different types of megaliths in Gadap tehsil of Karachi district.

Thohar Kanaro

This village is located 50 km north of Karachi and is famous for megalithic monuments. There are three megalithic sites located in south, north and east of the village. The main megalithic complex is located in the

Megaliths in Karachi

Introduction

The subject of megaliths in Pakistan has not been so far probed in depth. Having spent several years in investigating Sindh's megalithic monuments, I have discovered a new, fascinating and complex subject as these apparently are stretched over different periods of time. In recent explorations, I have discovered several megalithic sites in Khirthar, Bado, Lakhi mountain ranges and Kohistan region of Sindh. During the frequent trips to Gadap Taluka of Karachi District, I came across several prehistoric and Bronze Age settlement sites. The landscape of Karachi is dotted with prehistoric and historic period monuments. The prehistoric monuments include stone circles, stone circular structures, menhirs, dolmens, and stone alignments/rows. Historic monuments comprise mostly stone carved graves erected between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, this paper deals with megalithic monuments in Gadap tehsil of Karachi. All the megalithic monuments were discovered between 2009 and 2015. Therefore, this paper describes all the megalithic monuments discovered during the afore-mentioned years.

Megaliths have been also found in other parts of Pakistan. They have been also reported from Yasin valley in Ghizer district, Gilgit-Baltistan (Dani 2001) and Swat valley in Khyber Paktunkhwa (Vidale and Olivieri 2004). Megaliths are also found in many regions of Sindh and are particularly abundant in Thana Bula Khan, Gadap,

Naugon. Pawar (2012) also reports a menhir and a dolmen with cup-marks from Hirapur, India. According to him there are thirty nine cup-marks on the capstone of the dolmen. Not a single report has been published about megaliths and cupules in Pakistan. Although one finds several reports by Italian archaeologists from Swat, there is no report of cupules associated with menhirs and dolmens in this part of Sindh. However, I have discovered a large number of menhirs and dolmens with cupules in Sindh which are found in the regions of Thana Bula Khan, Mal Maari, Jungshahi, Makhi, Moidan and Thohar Khanaro.

The southern face of Thohar Kanaro menhir has human and geometric carvings. It also has interesting four-dot-pattern carvings. The whole surface from bottom to top is engraved with such four dots. These dots might have some symbolic significance and meanings to the prehistoric population of Maher valley who made and worshipped these stones.

Eastern Megaliths of Thohar Kanaro

There are also a few megalithic monuments in the east of Thohar Kanaro. This includes a menhir, stone alignment and cairn. Stone alignment is surrounded by low-lying hills of Thohar Kanaro (Fig.15). There were 15 small and large monoliths in the stone alignment. Only one monolith is still standing while all others have fallen to the ground now. The standing monolith has grid-like patterns. To the east of this stone row is located a reclining menhir. To the west of menhir and stone is a cairn (Fig. 16) perched on a hill overlooking a hill stream. This cairn is topped with a small menhir.

Kararo Muqam Megaliths

There are several megaliths at Kararo Muqam which lies two km west of Thohar Kanaro that include cairns,

south of the village. These are a stone circle, a square structure, menhirs, and two stone rows.

There are two stone circles at Thohar Kanaro, one small and the other large. The larger stone circle is located west of the engraved menhir. About 19 monoliths were used to make this stone circle (Fig.13). Three monoliths were found lying broken on the ground. It has a diameter of 68 feet, the largest stone circle so far discovered in Sindh. One also finds large stone circles in Thana Bula Khan valley. Plenty of these are found in Sari and Mol valleys of Thana Bula Khan which are venerated by local community. The villagers believe that these sacred spaces belonged to their ancestors and some of these are invoked on special occasions.

To the south of stone circle is a square structure, locally called *kotero*. Such square structures are abundantly found in Sindh-Kohistan region of Sindh province. The main entrance of the square structure opens to the east. The heights of walls are not more than three feet. Close to this square structures are some ancient rectangular graves and two stone alignments. The first stone alignment has six monoliths and another has five monoliths. Both stone alignments also lie west of the engraved menhir (Fig. 14).

The menhir contains petroglyphs. There are three or four such engraved menhirs in Gadap tehsil of Karachi district. The menhir of Thohar Kanaro also contains cupules. Menhirs with cupules have been reported from different regions in India also.

A few researchers also report cupules associated with megaliths that are especially connected with menhirs and dolmens. Mathpal (1995), who studied the rock art of Kumaon Himalaya, reports several monoliths with cupules. These monoliths are located at Joyon and

referred to as the grave of Asahbo, a term that is used for the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him). Any grave of unusual size is always referred to either of Asahbo or Sufi saint in Sindh-Kohistan region of Sindh. The grave is oriented south-north and marked with two monoliths north and south of the grave (Fig. 18). Another grave marked with a monolith is at a walking distance from this grave. There is also a stone circle at this site which is revered by local community.

Wankhand Megaliths

This megalithic site is located three km east of Maher valley on the bank of Wankhand hill stream. There are menhirs and stone circles at this site (Fig.19). Apart from menhirs and stone circles, there is also a large stone circular structure which is associated with giants (Fig. 20). Local people believe that giants built this structure. Likewise, people also associate the rock paintings in Maher valley with giants. Maher valley which is situated 50 km north of Karachi is home to one of the largest Mesolithic sites in Karachi region. This valley comprises rock art and megalithic sites. There are also ancient dams (*gabarbands*) which were built on Maher hill stream.

Stone circular structures are aplenty in Mol, Malir, Moidan, Makhi, Mal Maari, Taung, Sari, Baran, Gaj, Nali and Thado valleys of Sindh. I have discussed some of these stone circular structures elsewhere (Kalhor 2013). There is also a menhir east of Kand Jhnag amid historic Chaukhandi tombs of Jakhra tribe (Fig. 21).

The Wankhand Menhir lies east of stone circular structure. Menhirs are found almost in every other village in Gadap. However, many are found in Thohar Kanaro, Melo and Mol valleys in Gadap tehsil. I also found some

stone circles, and menhirs. Apart from megaliths, there are also cup-marks at this site. There is a rock shelter at this site where people take rest in the summers. While their livestock graze in the open fields the shepherds of Thohar Kanaro take rest in this place. People who visit the site as recreation almost always engrave something in the rock shelter. Shoe and hand-prints are found on top overhang of rock shelter. The carving with steel axe the most potent weapon of shepherds has been found in rock shelter. Carvings of axe in Gadap tehsil are aplenty. Any novice artist makes first attempt of his skill by engraving a hand print with an axe. The axe petroglyphs are in abundance at Lahaut rock art site in Mol and Thado valleys. Interestingly, these amateur artists sometimes also inscribe their names with axe or hand-print petroglyphs.

Burfat Village Stone Alignment

This village is located three km north of Thohar Kanaro village. There is a stone alignment at Burfat village. There were three monoliths in this stone alignment out of which two have collapsed (Fig. 17). A lone monolith is still standing. Both recumbent monoliths contain geometric designs and atypical cupules. Close to this stone row are a number of recumbent monoliths and boulders. These seem to have been important prehistoric sites due to the presence of so many boulders which were brought from other locations.

Ak Waro Khet Megaliths

This site is located four km north of Yar Muhammad Kanaro village. There are few megaliths at this site which include menhirs, graves with monoliths and stone circle. The grave is located at 'Khet waro muqam'. This grave is

is oriented south-north (Fig. 23). There are 11 monoliths in the stone alignment. Five monoliths are still standing while six have fallen. The local community regards this as a sacred space and does not cultivate or cut a tree near this alignment fearing the curse of those who made this sacred alignment. The cup-marks are located south of this alignment. There are 11 cup marks at this site. The cup-marks are found in Khirthar, Bado, and Lakhi ranges of Sindh. Apart from these ranges, a large number of them can also be found in Maher, Thana Bula Khan and Gadap regions of Karachi and Jamshoro districts respectively. Some cupule sites are located along the Baran and Mol valleys. Locally these cup-marks are called *jogun*, *piyala* or *ukhareyon*. They were used for a variety of purposes. Some small cup-marks were used and are still in use by people in Khirthar as oil lamps. This does not mean that their original use was also the same; in fact some large cup-marks were used for grinding spices, grains and making paints (Kalhoro 2014). Bednarik (2010) has listed 216 functions of the cup-marks.

An early description of the cupules is by Rivett-Carnac (1883) who studied the cupules in Kumaon and Central India. He stated that cupules were frequent around Mahadeo shrines and temples and these were associated with carvings of lingam and yoni signs. In his other paper he attempted to explain cup-mark variability, calling it permutation, as proto-writing code (Rivett-Carnac 1903).

There are several studies on Indian cupules (Kumar 1995, Bednarik and Pawar 2012). The growing interest on the rock art in general and cupules in particular among rock art scholars in India has prompted them to form regional rock art societies to deal with the subject systematically. Some of the studies by Kumar (1995), Kumar and Robert (2002) provide the dating of the cupules to many scholars already working on the cup-

menhirs at Ghaggar Phatak on the Karachi- Thatta Road (Fig.22).

Sari Jhap Megaliths

This megalithic site is located three km east of Gadap town. There are three stone circular and one square structure at this site. All these structures are still considered sacred by local community who protects them religiously and do not let anyone move any of these stones from the site. There are also petroglyphs near these structures. Majority of the carvings are geometric. Some shoe prints have also been engraved by shepherds who graze their livestock there. Interestingly, numerous modern petroglyphs are found here. Some of the shepherds have engraved drawings of trucks and buses. In their pastime while their animals are grazing, they keep themselves busy in engraving their names and hand prints. The young shepherds when interviewed told me that the first thing they learn when they grow up is to engrave hand-print. They keep engraving till they become skillful artists. Later, as they become more artistic and dexterous they engrave shoe-prints, animals and whatever they observe around them. They use both stone and steel tools for engraving. A variety of knives are also used to engrave on a boulder and rock wall.

There are also ancient petroglyphs near these circular structures. Some signs seem to be Sasanian *tamga* (*nishans*). Similar signs are still stamped on the cattle of local community in Gadap tehsil, Karachi.

Melo Buthi Stone Alignment

This megalithic site is located five km east of Gadap. There are several mortars and ancient graveyards at this site. Apart from this, there is also a stone alignment which

menhirs and six dolmens. The dolmen are square structures made of four orthostats (one for each side) supporting a capstone. The capstones of most of the dolmens are either broken or lying nearby the structure. There are several dolmen sites in Karachi. I discovered 16 dolmen sites during my expedition of 6 years, from 2009 to 2015. I will discuss all dolmen sites in my forthcoming paper on the “Discovery of Dolmen sites in Karachi”.

Usman Shah Megaliths

This megalithic site is located two km north of Rozi Band. There are two cairn circles one km before the shrine of Usman Shah on the Moidan-Kand Jhang Road (Fig. 26). Both cairn circles are considered sacrosanct by local community. There is also a dolmen one km north of the shrine of Usman Shah on way to Kand Jhang.

Conclusion

The megaliths of Gadap in Karachi were not reported earlier as not even a single megalith was ever excavated. On the basis of excavation of similar structures in India one can argue that megaliths of Karachi also belong to Bronze and Iron Age. One cannot say with certainty that all the megaliths are burials. On the basis of illegitimate digging by treasure-hunters, one can conclude that no human remains were found from any of the megaliths. It is possible that some of the megaliths especially square structures and stone alignments represent the religious places of the Bronze and Iron Age people. The association of cup-marks with some of the megaliths is also interesting. These cup-marks on dolmens and menhirs may have been ancient calendars.

All these megalithic sites are considered as sacred spaces. There is an interesting folklore that surrounds the

marks in different parts of India.

In Pakistan, not many studies have been done on the cup-marks. Cupules were given a scholarly attention by Italian scholars Olivieri and Vidale (2004, 2005) and Pakistani scholars (Kalhoro 2010-11). The Italian scholars focused on the cupules in Swat valley. They have documented several cupules sites in the valley. The present author also documents several cupule sites in Islamabad and Sindh. The cup-marks in Sindh are totally unknown to scholars who are working in Pakistan.

Manhah Buthi Menhir

This hill is located three km east of Melo Buthi. There are a few cairns and a menhir overlooking Mol-Gadap road (Fig. 24). The cairns have been illegally excavated by treasure-hunters.

Rozi Band Megaliths

This megalithic site is located 25 km from Gadap town. This site is famous for dolmens, square structures and menhirs. Local community of Moidan and other villages does not cultivate or graze their cattle near this sacred site of Rozi Band. As discussed above almost all the megalithic sites are considered sacred by the local community and they do not vandalize any of the megaliths.

The square structure (*kotero*) is the main megalith at this site (Fig 25). The walls of structure are two feet high. The northern walls are flanked by monoliths. It seems that there were two monoliths on northern side of structures also which may have flattened over the period of time. However, no monolith was found close to the structure.

To the west of this square structure is a cairn-circle. Not much can be said about this as no excavation was carried out. To the south of this cairn circle are two

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existence of megaliths. Some people believe that they were erected by giants in the past and were their worship places. This is one of the reasons that local people do not destroy the megaliths. Some other people believe that they were built by their ancestors but were not sure when these were erected.

addicts. Today these famous tombs are facing multiple human and environmental threats. I will briefly discuss these threats to the heritage and finally recommend the role, civil society can play to safeguard these treasures of the past from further decay and damage. The Chaukhandi graveyard is a popular tourist attraction in Pakistan in general and for Karachi in particular. Many people visit the site daily. Chaukhandi tombs are not safe from the callous attitude of the visitors as majority of them without realizing the historical value of these monuments damage them by engraving their names on the slabs. Some of the decorative slabs have also been stolen.

The descendants of Jokhia tribe also hold annual fair at the Chaukhandi of Pir Aari. During the festivities of Mela, people also deface the *Chaukhandi* tombs. The unabated extremism has also not spared this graveyard. The Taliban sent a stern warning in 2015 to the local people to stop holding annual fair otherwise they would detonate the Chaukhandi tomb of Pir Aari. Local people also confirmed this threat to funfair organizers when I met them. In 2013 Taliban had already destroyed Chaukhandi of Jam Miran.

Another threat to *Chaukhandi* tombs is from grave-diggers who stole bones from the graves. The grave digging to steal bones is a booming business in Pakistan and it is more widespread in mega city of Karachi where the number of deaths is much higher than other places. These bones are used in black magic by those practising hexes. The grave-robbers who dig, defile corpses and steal their bones remain at large and are seldom apprehended due to insufficient staff and non-availability of night watchmen at the *Chaukhandi* site.

In the evenings, people are seen playing cricket in the cemetery and nobody stops them, even the night

Human and Environmental Threats to Chaukhandi tombs and Role of Civil Society

Introduction

Pakistan has six world heritage sites and another 18 on the tentative list. The Chaukhandi tombs have been on the tentative list of UNESCO world heritage status since 1993. The Chaukhandi tombs are an astonishing collection of elaborately carved sandstone tombs belonging to the Jokhio and Baloch tribes dating back to the 15th-18th centuries (Fig.27). The tombs stretch for over two kilometers (Zajadacz –Hastenrath 2003; Kalhor 2011; Hasan 1996). These tombs are located less than half a km off the National Highway, a thoroughfare that connects Karachi to Thatta, the ancient city that houses world heritage site of Makli.

A decade ago, when one travelled on the National Highway to Bhambore, another heritage site on UNESCO tentative list *Chaukhandi* tombs were clearly visible. Today, unauthorised mushrooming of truck garages and parking lots has blocked the view of Chaukhandi tombs from the Highway. Moreover, a road that leads to Chaukhandi tombs is always blocked with heavy vehicles which are seen parked there in haphazard manner.

Human Threats

Chaukhandi tombs, once a popular tourist destination especially for Karachiites is now an abode of drug

tombs (Fig.30). Many other trucks are seen dumping *bajri* (gravel) near *Chaukhandi* site. This *bajri* dumping ground is one of the biggest in Karachi. People involved in construction industry buy *bajri* from here. Therefore, this activity and emissions from heavy vehicles have damaged the *Chaukhandi* tombs. The original pale colour of dome of Jam Murid's tomb now looks much blackened. Moreover, hazardous emissions from constant burning of solid waste in the vicinity of *Chaukhandi* has also unfortunately contributed to the gradual decay and ruining of the structures.

Role of Civil Society to Safeguard Tombs

Civil society groups are very strong and powerful in Pakistan. Many NGOs emerged during the Musharraf's government (1999-2007) in Pakistan; some of them were directly concerned with heritage. In Karachi only, there are over a dozen such NGOs that work on heritage but all of them lack activism with respect to heritage sustainability and preservation of City Heritage. Civil society can act as a strong bulwark against the elements responsible for the neglect and decay of cultural heritage in Pakistan. It can actively raise a collective voice against the nefarious groups who have brought destruction and damage to *Chaukhandi* tombs. The following line of action can be taken by civil society to safeguard the *Chaukhandi* tombs.

With the activism of NGOs, all truck garages can be removed to other part of the city because their presence is causing constant damage to the structures due to toxic emissions and other pollutants.

There should be a coordinated effort by civil society of Karachi to be more loud and vocal against the dumping ground at *Chaukhandi* tombs. They should

watchman who is on duty. As a result the tombs are being constantly damaged by these people.

Another major threat to *Chaukhandi* tombs is from the construction of new tombs. A recent phenomenon that has come to limelight and is being practiced at the site is that if any Sindhi literary figure dies he/she would be buried in area comprising *Chaukhandi* graveyard. Two very eminent literary figures, Tajal Bewas and Shamsheer ul Hyderi are now buried in this graveyard (Fig. 28). The proximity of these tombs has brought physical harm to the historical *Chaukhandi* tombs. Similarly, stone carved canopy of Jam Murad (Fig.29) was built close to an old canopy of Jokhia chief which has played havoc with the old tomb. All the construction material was dumped near the old canopy and its platform was used freely by the labour for resting leisurely, taking tea, lunch and even siesta. This damaged the canopy immensely and the decay has gone unnoticed to the authorities concerned.

Environmental Threats

Pollution levels in the city of Karachi had risen significantly over recent years as a result of unbridled growth in industry, traffic and population (Ilyas 2007). The *Chaukhandi* tombs are also facing problems from air pollution and industrial pollution that has affected *Chaukhandi* tombs the most. Emissions and other pollutants from factories north of the *Chaukhandi* tomb of Jam Murid are also affecting the *Chaukhandi* tombs hugely.

The toxic emission from diesel and petrol vehicles has resulted in considerable harm to the *Chaukhandi* tombs. Many trucks and oil tankers are seen parked at garages which usually block the access to *Chaukhandi*

Sirhandi, Dhani Parto, Memon Goth, Daud Shoro and Danbaro villages protested vociferously against destruction of the precious heritage and the media immediately flashed the news thus bringing the issue to the center of public attention. The media personnel visited the *Chaukhandi* site physically and reported this issue of tomb destruction at the hands of Taliban. Later, *Chaukhandi* tomb of Jam Miran was restored with the help of local people and civil society organizations. This reflects how powerful, influential and vibrant civil society is in Karachi.

Many NGOs working on heritage i.e Endowment Fund Trust for preservation of the Heritage of Sindh (EFT) and others are against any new construction in historical graveyard. They and other NGOs should continue to play pro-active role in safeguarding the historical monuments at *Chaukhandi* which are being environmentally damaged due to the building of new tombs at the *Chaukhandi* site. With their activation on different forums, the illegal activity can be stopped forthwith.

One can save many heritage sites including *Chaukhandi* tombs if NGO activism is vibrant in heritage sector in Pakistan in general and Karachi in particular. These NGOs are working on restoration, preservation and documentation of heritage. But what is more important to focus is the preservation of heritage not only from environmental but also from human threats.

demand that *bajri* (gravel) dumping ground should be moved immediately to other part of the city. Waste disposal should also be stopped and no more solid waste-burning be allowed in the vicinity of *Chaukhandi* tombs. All these deplorable activities cause environmental damage to the *Chaukhandi* tombs.

Due to prevalent activation of civil society a strong voice should be raised against the illegal grave-diggers who steal bones from the graves for witchcraft. Concerted efforts are required to enlighten the culture and tourism department and urge the authorities concerned to complete the erection of the boundary wall which they started in 2012, on a fast footing. Despite frequent protests by the local people to save *Chaukhandi* tombs, no heed was paid to their voice. The government will take any serious note of its grave negligence only when civil society groups and especially print media highlight the issues in their respective newspapers. Once the boundary wall is erected, at least some of the illegal activities would be curtailed.

Civil society is also very vocal against Taliban's detestable activities in the country. Civil society organizations should also take a serious note of Taliban activities in *Chaukhandi* like the one they took in 2013 against the destruction of a *Chaukhandi* tomb. At that time they took out processions to bring this issue to the forefront in media, so that no future incident with respect to destruction of tombs could ever take place. Civil society's voice is instantly heard by the viewers and action plan can be developed by the respective governments to counter the anti state activities of the Taliban. When Taliban destroyed the *Chaukhandi* of Jam Miran in 2013, the civil society organizations of Razaqabad, Pipri, Gharo towns and Jam village, Pir

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appointed his sister Duhsala to rule over the Jats and Meds. Duhsala went to the new kingdom and took over charge of the country and cities of Sindh and in the process found that there were no Brahmans or wise men in this part of the country to help guide their fortunes. She therefore, wrote a long letter to her brother seeking assistance in this regard. The emperor assembled 30,000 Brahmans from all over Hindustan and sent them, with all their goods and dependents to settle in Sindh (Lari 1994:20).

There are references about the maltreatment meted out to Jats by Chach as clearly described in Chachnama, an ancient historical account on Sindh. According to Chachnama, Chach degraded the Jats and Luhanahs and placed restrictions over their chiefs. He took a hostage from amongst them and confined him in the fort of Brahmanabad. He imposed restrictions on these people of Jat and Luhanah tribes such as that they should not carry swords, except in case of urgent necessity, that their undergarments should be of some woolen cloth, that they should not wear velvet or silken cloth, that they might use scarfs of cotton thread of black or red colour, that they must ride horses without saddles, that they must walk bare-footed and bare-headed, that when going out of their houses, they must take dogs with them, that they must supply firewood to the ruler of Brahmanabad, that they serve him in the capacity of guides and spies, that if they distinguish themselves for these qualities, they would be considered trustworthy and honest, that they must live in harmony and co-operate with king Agham's son Sarhand, and that if an enemy invaded the country, they should consider it their duty to stand by him and fight for him.

Mayaram Shail states in his book "Against History and Against State" that the Meds and Jats were the two

Jat Culture

Introduction

This article deals with the folklore of Jats including the information on Battle of Bungah, role of camel in the folktale of Sasui Punhun, depiction of camel in the sufi poetry and local or native perspective about who is Jat, myth about not selling camel milk and naming camels according to their age etc. It also comprises information about various camel breeds available in the village and camel marketing. Finally, it includes the data about out-migration.

History of Jats

The Jats are an ancient tribe of Sindh. There are a number of references available in the historical accounts of Sindh pertaining to the Jats. According to Arab geographers, Jats and Meds the two main tribes of Sindh clashed with each other frequently. According to Sanskrit sources, when Sahsi II died in AD 652, Chach seized the throne and proclaimed himself king. The Jats and Meds were the two main tribes of Sindh at that time that had settled on the banks of the river and frequently fought with each as they had done in Medea till they finally realized the advantage of living in peace. They sent their chiefs to the Emperor Duryodhana of Hastanapur (Meerut) to beg him to appoint a king over them whose authority would be acceptable to both tribes. The emperor

frequent clashes of Mids with the Muslim Kingdom of Mansura (Sindh). The Arabs, however, seem to have been unable to permanently repress the Mids. Expeditions against Mids and the Jats continued till A.D 844 (ibid: 20).

Arab geographic-history written from the viewpoint of the sedentary state constructs the pastoral groups without any political order. What is understated in the narrative are vital details, for instance, the Jats and Mids are involved in the active commercial life of the Persian Gulf. The Chachnama, which castigates the Jats and other tribes as “detestable people”, highway robbers, thieves, pirates with wild nature of brutes, also mentions that they are employed in the armed forces of Sindian kings and as guides of caravans (ibid:21).

According to Mayaram, the question of migration remains open and conjectural. It has been suggested that the Jats migrated from Indus valley in lower Sindh to northeast into Punjab and Multan, where they seem firmly established and sedentarized by early 11th century. Between 9th and 11th centuries the Mid wandered along the banks of the Indus, Sindh, Kutch, and Kathiawar, reaching the frontiers of Makran. Both Jats and Mid were among the most important mobile and migratory population of this period. Arab geographers refer to their movement from Multan to the sea and across the desert. They formed a large population ‘unconverted to the faith’, who occupied pastures on the fringes of the desert and along the Indus, cultivating camels and goats (ibid: 21).

As regards their religious belief, Al Biruni, an Arab geographer of 11th century, states that the Jats worshipped the Lingam, the fertility symbol of one of the Hinduistic religious communities. Likewise, the Jats are called

major migratory groups of northwestern India between the 7th and 11th centuries. Arab writers refer to clusters of these groups inhabiting the swamps, mountains, and deserts of Sindh, as the oldest inhabitants of Sindh, had divided the region among them and frequently fought each other. Arab sources suggest that the frequent Med and Jat raids on seaports and the maritime trade of the Persian Gulf and the western Indian Ocean caused the Arab conquest of Sindh. Gardizi describes the al-Mayd and the al-Zutt as sea pirates of the coastal region from Daybul (originally Debal) to Kathiawar. Daybul was then part of kingdom of Dahir, son of the Brahman ruler Chach. Muhammad bin Qasim, son-in-law of the governor of Iraq, invaded Sindh in A.D 711 when the Khalifa declared war against Sindh and Hind. Arab sources explain the conquest on grounds of protecting the commerce of the Persian Gulf against alleged piracy, an argument that scholars like Wink seem to accept (Mayaram 2003:19).

Up to the mid-ninth century the governors of Sindh continued to raid the unsubdued areas of Sindh, took large numbers of prisoners as slaves and made inroads into transhumance. While certain groups of Jats compromised and were converted to Islam, the Meds concentrated in southeastern Sindh and persisted in their hostility. Jats were extended *aman* or immunity, after their submission and, they subsequently joined Arab armies and were deployed against the Mids. The Arabs killed three thousands Mids in an expedition and attacked their sources of water by constructing an embankment. With the help of Jat chiefs they brought sea water through a canal to their tank, making enemy’s water saline and also sent out marauding expeditions against them. During tenth and eleventh centuries there are references to

collector during the British period, gives the list of Jat tribe inhabiting different parts of Sindh. According to him, the derivation of this word is unknown. Owing to the opening and extension of railway lines in Sindh, many settlers of Jats have disappeared and the number of camels has decreased (Ansari 1901:54-55).

Folklore

Folklore, like all other products of man's artistic endeavour, is an ideological manifestation of human creativity. Folklore includes all myths, legends, folktales, ballads, riddles, proverbs and superstitions (Dundes 1989). The term folklore was first coined by William J. Thomas in 1846. Like other elements of human culture, folklore is not merely the creation of chance. Folklore exists in time and space, and is current in people's linguistic and social contacts, during the passage of years and accompanying historical change.

The folktale is an important constituent of folklore. Even today, for the Jats, a folktale is one of the principle forms of entertainment. The culture of Jats abounds in folklore and folktales that dominate their daily discussions. Folktales of Jang Bungah (Battle of Bungah), Sassui-Punhun, Momal Rano, and Jatan ain Changan Jo Maro (The battle of Jats and Changs) are some tales which dominate the social life of Jats. They greatly eulogize the camels in these folktales. Amongst all these folktales, however, Battle of Bungah is more prominent and significant for the Jats because they were directly involved in that battle. This folktale is still narrated in many Jamali villages in district Matiari. The six Jats named Bhai Khan Jat, Miro Khan Jat, Bakho Jat, Umeed Ali Jat, Ali Bakhsh Jat and Nabi Dad Jat narrated this story. The story that they told me is as follows:

Hindki, with a touch of belittlement, by the Pathan. In striking contrast to this, the Imperial Gazetteer states that Jat is a collective name for all Muslims in the Hinduistic society of Punjab. The same was maintained by some informants in Sindh, for whom before Partition, Jat was synonymous with Muslims in Sindh, but was abandoned in its meaning after the Partition, when Islam became the official religion. It would be misleading to deduce from these statements a definite religious belief, as all facts taken together show, on the contrary, that the Jats are geographically and culturally in an intermediate position between the Islamic countries west of the Indus and the equally pure Hinduistic countries east of the Indus. In this context the Sikhs must be counted as a Hinduistic community. This intermediate position gives the key to many conflicting statements about the Jat (Westphal-Hellbusch n.d: 48).

As regards ethnic difference, it is written in the Gazetteer of Punjab that the Baloch and Pathan contemptuously called all people not belonging to their own tribes Jat, without any regard to caste or occupation. It is on the same level when Balochistan Gazetteer informs us that a distinction exists among the Jats themselves." The camelmen and graziers among the Baloch are shown as a Jat clan within the tribe of same name, but their name is pronounced with a soft 't' as opposed to the hard 't'. These camelmen speak a different language to other Jats and many of their customs vary, but it has not been ascertained whether there is any real ethnical distinction. The tribesmen look upon the Jats as their social inferiors and this position is generally accepted by the Jat themselves (Westphal-Hellbusch n.d:48-49).

Shaikh Sadik Ali Sher Ali Ansari, who was deputy

accept the returned camels unless ‘Malhan’ was found and handed over to him. Sardar Ahmed Khan found the missing camel after tireless efforts but also discovered at the same time that Malhan had been gifted to Siraj Katar Magsi. It was a tradition among the tribes that they used to distribute the stolen animals among the tribesmen. When asked to return Malhan, Siraj concocted a story saying that as ‘they were taking away the *wag* back to our village’ it died on way.

Actually Malhan had not died. It was alive and it had been hidden somewhere. Still, he agreed to compensate for the loss. But the Sardar of Jamalis refused to accept the offer. At the same time as events unfolded, Siraj Katar Magsi was jealous of Sardar Ahmed Khan Magsi’s popularity and valour among other Sardars. So, he wanted to make the situation worse intentionally. He endeavoured that both tribes should fight with each other. Sardar Ghulam Muhammad Khan Jamali began threatening the Sardar of Magsis that he would avenge the loss of his tribesmen and that of his animals.

After the lapse of four or five months, Sardar Ahmed Khan Magsi had to travel to Lasbo Pat (plains) to settle a dispute that had erupted between two sections of Magsi tribe. Some people informed Ghulam Muhammad Jamali that Sardar Ahmed Khan had landed at Lasbo Pat and was engaged in convincing his tribes for military expeditions against Jamalis. Jamalis knew that Chandia tribe was also supporting the Magsi Sardar. Sensing danger, the Jamalis were ordered to get prepared for war against the Magsis. They marched against Magsis at the Otaq of Sardar Ahmed Khan Magsi. The tribes clashed and a battle ensued. The Jamalis suffered a defeat and were forced to retreat. After the defeat Sardar Ghulam Muhammad Khan Jamali went directly to Shoran to ask for help from Sardar Sher Muhammad Khan Rind. But

Battle of Bungah

Camel lifting was widespread in Sindh and Balochistan in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The main objective of this robbery was to weaken the opposing tribe, politically and economically. In the past the numbers of livestock designated the status and position of individual or tribe in the society and culture of both the Baloch and Sindhis.

The battle of Bungah started after Magsis indulged in camel rustling in Talpur Period (1783-1843). In retaliation, Jamalis (inhabitants of Chowki Jamali village in district Jaffarabad) also took the *wag* of Magsis. The hostility continued between the two tribes for quite a long time. They frequently clashed with each other over the issue of camel lifting. At that time Ghulam Muhammad Khan Jamali was the Sardar of the Jamalis while Ahmed Khan Magsi was the chieftain of his tribe.

After the intervention of some Sardars of Baloch tribes, both agreed to end the hostilities, provided that compensations were made to each tribe, according to the casualties and the return of the stolen *wag* (herd of camels). Sardars of both tribes sat together to iron out their differences and estimated the casualties and the number of stolen wags. Each of the tribes suffered an equal number of casualties thus one issue was resolved amicably. But as regards to the *wag*, Magsis had stolen more animals. Sardar Ghulam Muhammad Khan Jamali claimed the return of his *wag*, to which the other party agreed.

When people of Jamali tribe took their *wag* back to Sardar Ghulam Muhammad Khan Jamali, he found one camel named ‘Malhan’ missing. He sent his tribesmen in search of ‘Malhan’. Simultaneously, he also sent a message to Sardar Ahmed Khan Magsi that he would not

issued threats. Sardar Ahmed Khan Magsi again rushed to tell Sardar Wali Muhammad Chandio about these threats. Sardar Wali Muhammad promised to help him. And when things began to go from bad to worse, respective tribesmen were called for war.

Troops of both Sardars met at Panjuk near the present town of Jhal Magsi and fought a pitched battle. The battle continued for several hours in which many soldiers from both sides were killed. During the battle Mir Sher Muhammad Khan Rind was also killed. When the news of his death spread and reached his tribesmen, the latter lost hope of continuing the war and began to retreat.

The above story reflects socio-economic role of camels in the culture of Jats. This story is common and widespread among the Jats of central and upper Sindh. Apart from this story, there is another story popularly known as the folk love story of Sassui and Punhun. This story is also popular among the Jats of my locales of Digano Jamali and Bakhar Jamali (where I did field work for this paper). In this story, the Jats eulogize the role of the camel.

Role of Camel in the Folktale of Sassui- Punhun

According to people of Digano Jamali and Bakhar Jamali, Punhun was the son of Jam Ari who was the ruler of Kech Makran. The sons of Jam Ari were engaged in trade and used to take goods to Bambhore and from Bambhore they used to transport spices to Makran. Once, Punhun also went along his brothers to Bambhore. Here he saw a beautiful girl named Sassui. Punhun fell in love with her at first sight. Sassui was the daughter of a washerman. Punhun began working with this washerman. After some time he got married to Sassui in the town of Bambhore, lived with his wife and refused to return to his

Sher Muhammad Rind had gone to Hyderabad to meet Mir Nur Muhammad Khan Talpur, the then ruler of Sindh. Sardar Ghulam Muhammad Khan then set out for Hyderabad where Mir Sher Muhammad Khan was staying at the palace of Mir Nur Muhammad Khan Talpur. Sardar Ghulam Muhammad Khan Jamali narrated the whole story about war and casualties that his tribe had suffered. On hearing this, Mir Sher Muhammad Khan Rind vowed to take revenge from the Magsis and sent message to the Sardar of Magsi tribe to prepare for war.

Tribesmen from Jhangara Bajara in Dadu were conscripted. When the war party reached Dhari Bhangar near the present town of Kandhkot, the numbers of tribesmen exceeded well over 12000. When this news reached Sardar Ahmed Khan Magsi, he rushed with his son Mehon Khan and nephew Gohram Khan to Sardar Wali Muhammad Khan Chandio for help. Sardar Wali Muhammad Khan pledged to help him. He said that he would first go to Sardar Sher Muhammad Rind for peace parleys; if he would accept it then we would not fight. If he would reject it then we would fight by your side. Wali Muhammad Khan Chandio sent one of his commanders, Ghazi Khan Chandio with Sardar Ahmed Khan Magsi to Mir Sher Muhammad Rind for peace talks.

Ghazi Khan came to know that Sardar Sher Muhammad Khan Rind was staying in Garhi Rehman village with Sardar Raheem Khan Umrani. Ghazi Khan sent his message to the Sardar saying that he wanted to meet him and offer truce with Magsis. Sardar Sher Muhammad showed willingness and asked him to come to Shoran for a meeting. Ghazi Khan left for Shoran and met Sardar Sher Muhammad Khan Rind where his uncle Mir Bahram Khan ensured him that he would not wage war against Magsis. But after some time, Sardar Sher Muhammad Khan again

his camel without justifiable reason almost reducing the poor animal to pulp. After a few days, he realized that he had done something seriously wrong to his animal and he would get scared whenever he looked into the eyes of his camel. He shared this story of camel thrashing with his friends and relatives and that he felt nervous and frightened of such and such camel.

Bagho Jat, along with his friends and relatives, used to take a consignment from his village to Johi. His village lies 50 kilometers from Johi. On way back to his village, almost always night fell at a place called Wahi Pandi. There they used to take rest and then continue their caravan to the village. In order to avert any misfortunate, Bagho Jat always fastened his camel with ropes at night.

However, one night he fastened his camel in usual manner before going to sleep. He slept along with his friends and relatives in an abandoned building that lay on their way. After an hour or so the Jats, awakened by the shrieks of Bagho Jat, saw the camel ruthlessly mounted on top of Bagho Jat forcibly treading his body. It badly injured him and continued to hurt him through the constant movement of his front and hind legs. The friends rushed to Bagho Jat's rescue and did everything possible to remove the outrageous camel but it was too late. The camel had badly mauled him and broken his skeletal structure beyond treatment. Bagho Jat could not survive and died instantly. Jats were terribly awestruck and wondered how could the camel get itself unfastened, identify his tormentor and kill him instantly.

Apart from this incident Shazado and his tribesmen recounted two other stories in which a camel attempted to kill its owner. Both incidents took place in the Digano Jamali village.

One day, Allahyar Jat thrashed his camel badly

native place Kech Makran where his father Jam Ari was the ruler of Makran.

When the news of Punhun's refusal to return to Kech reached Jam Ari, he got very disappointed to hear the news. But his other sons Hoto and Nato promised their father that they would bring Punhun back to Kech.

The brothers of Punhun set out for Bambhore. When they reached the town they enquired about washerman and reached his house and met Punhun. They persuaded Punhun to return to Kech but he refused. One night, brothers of Punhun intoxicated him and his wife and took him away on the camel's back to Kech. When Sassui awoke in the morning, she found Punhun missing. She began crying bitterly and chased them following the footprints of camel and camelmen. First, she cursed the camelmen (Jats) and camels (Uthah). Later on she gave her blessings to camel and camelmen without whom Punhun might have encountered problems in walking down to Kech Makran.

Camel never forgets the beating

The camel has a long memory of taking revenge on those who have done it any harm; it will never forget violent treatment and will wait for the appropriate time for taking its vengeance. To describe people who can not forgive and reconcile, Jats say they have a camel's rancour.

There are a number of cases in which camel has done harm to people. I quote three examples here respectively in which camel attacked its owners killing one person and leaving two seriously injured. Four Jats namely Shazado, Rasool Bakhsh, Qurban and Murad narrated the story. According to them, Bagho Jat who was the inhabitant of Kacho area of Dadu, one day inflicted painful blows to

fascinating indigenous knowledge system which is very prominent and viable in everyday social life of Jats. They have developed an interesting system to rein in the wild camels. During the breeding season, which falls in the November and December, camels get wild and it is difficult to control them. They become so unruly that they sometimes harm their handlers very badly. A number of incidents have taken place in the village of Digano Jamali in which camels have bitten many people and devoured their arm or some other limb.

Jats never strike the camels when they are wild; rather they make the camels smoke and this helps them to remain calm and cool. For this purpose only wild camels are chosen and made to smoke and not every camel. What Jats do is that they blow the puffs of a cigarette into the nostrils of camels. By doing it repeatedly the camel slowly and gradually begins to enjoy the flavor of the puff. If a camel shows his dislike to the plain puffs of a cigarette, Jats push hashish filled puffs into the nostrils of camel. Once the camel inhales these puffs it becomes calm and his anger turns into sedation.

With the passage of time, the camel becomes so habitual and addicted to this practice that whenever it sees a person smoking nearby, it rushes to him as if demanding a cigarette puff. People often get frightened to see camel approaching as if to harm them. However, their fright ends when the camel touches their cigarette only. They figure out that the camel needs puffs.

Leadership and Ego among Camels

Like human beings, young camels also give due respect to adult and older camels. The older camel always leads the rest of camels. The younger camel in the presence of older one never tries to surge ahead of the

because it began to avoid the load on its back and created problems for Allahyar. One evening as Allahyar returned from work, he took his club (*dando*) and began beating camel bitterly. After giving a good beating to the camel, Allahyar left. He returned home at night and went to bed after taking his dinner. He was sleeping on a cot in his courtyard when camel attacked Allahyar and devoured his arm. His family members awoke on his screaming and saved his life.

In the last example, a camel attacked its owner and greedily ate away his arm. Shazado and his tribesmen recalled that Abdullah Jat had badly beaten his camel some days back. Camel chose the appropriate time and attacked its owner. As soon as the camel mounted on Abdullah, he began shouting vehemently. The family members rushed to the spot to save him but the camel had already eaten away the arm of his prey.

As reflected in the above examples, the camel never forgets the torture or ill-treatment meted out to him and waits for the right moment to attack and take revenge. Its manner of attack is very dangerous and sudden. The camel always mounts on its enemy and thrusts its both knees on the chest of the person and begins a swaying movement that does not give any chance of reprieve to the victim to get out camel's clutches. This movement breaks the bones of the person being avenged. Therefore, Jat always avoids beating a camel. They know that if they beat him bitterly, it may take vengeance sooner or later. If the camel is beaten before the other camels, it feels his disrespect. In order to regain its respect it takes revenge in a cold blooded manner.

Making the Camel Smoke

The culture of Jats is very interesting. They have a

The following are some of the couplets that Jats rendered before me:

1. Camels, Punhoon's brothers and mountains gave me troubles,
All these discomforts for Beloved's union, I considered comforts.
2. I bear suffering given to me by camels, brothers-in-law and rocks
It is incumbent on me to seek Punhoon's tracks and walk.
Who would the waste land otherwise cross, if not so destined
3. The day you saw alien camels in your yard, Sasui, you should have,
Till dawn blocked their path
Using your hair braid like a chain, camels you should have fastened
Then your love, Punhoon, they would not have thus taken.
5. The day you saw alien camels in your yard,
You should have hidden the keys of the locks
You would have been taken care of, the following day.
6. Camels are wont to groan, they were quiet at my time,
The subdued ones raised no sound at the start,
Some secret agreement between these and those there was.
It is not Punhoon's brothers' doing but my unfavourable fate,
Time and tide are not subservient to camels and their men.
How can destiny be opposed by this insignificant one?
7. Bring not the camels nigh, for they have brought me

leader. If the younger camel tries to go ahead, the Jat immediately notices the extra agility of that camel and cries "get behind or go behind (Poeti thi or Poeti wanj). Camel listens and understands owner's call, slows down its strides and immediately goes behind. Jats always try to make the camel follow the rules. During the grazing time, younger camel never approaches the same meadow or leaf tree where the older or adult camel is already present. If the younger camel draws closer to the same tree and teases the adult camel, the Jat calls out camel's names loudly in order to keep him away from the senior lot. If the Jat observes that younger camel has made a habit of teasing the adult and older camels, he fastens the younger camel with ropes and gives him a hard spanking before the camels to whom he has been a cause of nuisance. After that beating, the younger camel never makes fun of the adult camels.

The adult camel refrains from fighting with the younger camel even if the latter continues teasing the adult camel. However, it stops grazing and playing with other camels. This makes the owner worried and he begins observing his activity and finally finds out that it is due to the mischief of the younger camels and the older camels stop grazing in protest. As mentioned earlier, in order to regain its respect and ego, owner beats the younger camel before the adult or older camel.

Depiction of Camel in the Sufi Poetry

The Jats of Digano Jamali narrate a number of poems representing the role of camels from the Shah Jo Risalo. The Jats remember the poetry of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai by heart.

They recite the poetry from the Sur Desi (The native) of the Risalo. This sur deals with woeful story of Sasui.

cross.

Difficult paths in which full grown camels alone can ledge.

There the maid with courage and faith intends to go.

13. From Kech came the caravan in grand array,

Camels' necks adorned with trappings and flowers' spray.

If you take me along, I will be your slave.

14. The guests brought best of camels to their resting place,

Like a falcon in its claws, they Punhoon snatched,

Merciless Punhoon left me to lament while I slept.

15. They rested before they went, their camels did groan,

Camels, kept away, the credit to them goes,

Start your journey today and reach them as fast as you can.

These were some of the poems that Jats shared with me. In one of the poems, one finds the mention of camel according to age and their knowledge of the different paths at the same time. The camel is the symbol of separation as reflected in the above mentioned poetry. In almost every other poem one finds Sasui complaining about the camels and camel riders who took his beloved Punhoon away to Kech.

Camel Milk

The Jats never sell the camel milk, rather it is self-consumed. There exists myth amongst Jats about not selling camel milk. They confided that Sassui had cursed us and our camels. She had said "Oh Jat, whenever you churn camel milk, camel would die". Therefore we don't sell camel milk lest our enemies churn the milk and if they do our camel will die. Not a single camel has ever died of churning camel milk as told by some Jats. Camel

distress,

Whip those accused ones and far away from me drive them,

For only recently they took with themselves my Punhoon away.

8. The camel riders reached their land, yet in my heart they dwell,

Movement of camels with paws like four feet gives me joy,

These dumb creatutes' silence brought me to the rocks.

9. May the dust not rise from the path to settle on my Love!

May the strong sun not disturb the camel on which he rides!

Oh Punhoon! You should not treat me thus, you so.

10. The camel riders left, playing a great fraud,

Punhoon's fragrance from every tree towards me wafts,

Journeying to my love if beasts eat my flesh, my bones will still walk.

11. Camels, camel riders and brothers-in-law were my foes,

Fourth enemy is the wind that erased Punhoon's track,

Fifth enemy became the sun that soon set,

Sixth enemy the mountain that straightened not its paths,

Seventh enemy the moon that rose not apace,

I stride fast through the hard rocks at eve, when birds are back.

12. Paths where tally camels' going is hard

Passes where colts cannot go, she intends to pass

Paths of which older camels may have knowledge to

Bhural	(of white complexion)
Muhan/Bouth Wado	(of long face)
Dighi Ghech Waro	(of long Neck)
Nandi Ghech Waro	(of short neck)
Bujar	(of hairy body)
Nachno	(Dancer)
Bajhano	(racer)
Muhandro	(having good features)
Sanero	(Thin and lanky)
Dilbar	(Loving)

Camel names according to age

The Jats have different name for calf as it grows each year it takes on a new Sindhi name.

Year	Male
One	Todo
Two	Goro
Three	Tehanro
Four	Birendo
Five	Chogo
Six	Shigo
Seven	Nesh

At the age of seven a camel becomes an adult. The approximate age of camel is 25 years.

Camel Breeds

There are about five camel breeds found in Sindh province. The description of these is as follows:

Tharelo: This breed of camel is found in Thar. People go to Thar for buying this camel. This camel does not have a massive body and is short in height. People of Bakhar Jamali mostly use them in camel carts.

milk is not churned rather it is blended in a *Mashk*. Mashk looks like a grain sack and is made of animal hide.

Who is Jat? A native perspective

There are many theories prevalent in Bakhar Jamali about the Jats. Jats believe that anybody who tends and breeds camel is called Jat. To put it differently, anybody who takes the bridle of camel is called Jat. Apart from this, some Jats hold that Jat is name of caste, it is not a profession. According to Bhai Khan, Shamsoo (Shams-udddin) Jat, Ghulamoo (Ghulam Ali) Jat and Gelo Jat, Jats living near the Koski (Badin) do not breed the camel. However, they tend the buffaloes. These Jats also live in many villages of Badin and Thatta.

Camel Names

It is common for Jats to name their camels. The Jats take two things into consideration while naming their camels, first, they observe the behaviour of camel to see how it runs, walks and works etc and second, they examine the characteristics of camels for example one with long neck, or short legs etc. All this exercise is done to identify each and every camel. Some of the names which are commonly used are as follows:

Marvi	(Heroine of folktale of Umar-Marvi)
Moomal	(Heroine of folktale of Moomal Rano)
Sassui	(Heroine of Folktale of Sassui-Punhun)
Garib	(not wild)
Dengo	(Wild)
Wehro	(Wild)
Faqir	(easy to ride and graze)
Mast	(intoxicated)
Karero	(of black complexion)

Camel Marketing

Camels are marketed in different areas of Sindh on weekly, monthly or annual basis. Two most famous camel markets in the country are held in Sindh province, one at Sajjan Sawai in Badin district for general livestock and the other at Oderolal which is exclusively for camels. Apart from this, three other camel fairs are held in Hala, Moro, Talhar and Islamkot respectively. A monthly Camel fair is held in Hala and people come from far flung areas of Sindh to sell and purchase camels. A weekly camel fair is held in Moro, Talhar and Islamkot. People from neighbouring areas attend these camel fairs in large number to buy and sell their animals.

The prices of camels are assessed depending upon their breed, type, utility, phenotypic appearances etc. In addition to this the interested buyers also take into account the decoration and adornment of the camel while buying the camels as the decorative camel has more economic value. People prefer to buy decorated camels very fondly.

Sindhi or Larri: This breed of camel is found in lower Sindh and is reared by Rebaris from whom people buy them. This camel is very speedy, runs at brisk pace and is used in camel racing. Larri camel has a massive body and a very beautiful look as compared to other breeds. .

Kohistani or Jabaloo: This breed of camel is found in hilly areas of Dadu, Larkana, Jamshoro and Karachi.

Dahati: This camel is found in the area of Dahat in Thar. The Dahati camel is famous for its brisk walk and speed. Many myths are prevalent in Thar about the speed of Dahati camel prominent among which is the folk love tale of Momal Rano. The legend has it that Momal was the daughter of King of Kak Mahal which was then located near the town of Jaisalmer in India. Rano was friend of Hamir Somro who was the King of Umarmot. Rano belonged to Mendro tribe which was then the powerful tribe in lower Sindh and Tharparkar. Rano had heard stories of beauty of Momal. One day he went to see her in Kak Mahal. Rano was very well-built and handsome person. As Momal saw Rano, she fell in love with him at first sight. Later, Rano frequently went to meet Moomal in Kak Mahal. He was so much engrossed in his pursuit for Momal that he would always travel to Kak Mahal at night and return to Umarmot before the sunrise. Kak Mahal lay 200 kilometers from Umarmot. People eulogize the Dahati camel by narrating this story to every one. They narrate with fascination and pride the briskness and fastness of the Dahati camel.

Sakro or Sakrai: This breed of camel is found in the coastal areas of Sindh.

All the breeds of camel found in Bakhar Jamali are used for different purposes i.e. riding, racing, transportation and dancing etc.

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Mahaars (bridles) and others purchase from the markets or from fellow Jats. The price of *Mahaar* ranges from Rs.100 to Rs.1000 depending on the quality of a bridle. The decorative bridle costs more than Rs. 200. Simple bridle costs Rs.50-100. The Jats decorate the bridle with colourful suspending flannels or tassels. They also give these bridles as gifts to their friends.

Most of the Jats make bridles to sell and earn a considerable amount of money. One of the famous bridle makers Jogi Jat earns 1500 to 2000 thousand per month. He is the only person in the family who makes bridles. He believes that if there are two skilled persons in the family they earn more than three thousand per month from making bridles.

Camel Necklace (Gorband)

This is the necklace of the camel which is decorated with multi-coloured tufts. Almost every Jat in the village has *gorband* for his camel. Most of Jats make *gorband* to sell in the market. A good decorative *gorband* costs more than one thousand.

Camel Garland (Ganee)

Jats also decorate their camels with colourful garlands. There are two types of garlands that Jats make. One is a simple and the other is decorative. The decorative *ganee* is full of beads. This type of *ganee* is locally known as 'Motin Wari Ganee' (a beaded garland). The price of beaded garland ranges from 300 to 500. Usually, three or five beaded garlands are put around the neck of a camel, whereas number of beads in simple garlands range from seven to ten (Fig. 32).

Beaded garlands are sold either in the market or to fellow Jats. Both men and women are skilled in making

Camel Art

Introduction

This article is based on my fieldwork conducted in Bakhar and Digano Jamali villages in Saeedpur taluka of Matiari District. The article deals with the camel art which includes decorative ornaments (*Saz*) and pleasing patterns created on the body of a camel (*Chit*). It also discusses camel brands (*Dag*) and camel riding, racing and dancing. The information on the role of artists in the community of Jats, depiction of geographical symbols on the body of a camel, colour symbolism, beauty competition and innovation has also been discussed in the paper.

Decorative Ornaments (Saz)

There are various decorative ornaments that are put on the camel. Locally, these decorative ornaments are known as *Saz* (Fig.31). The details of various ornaments that the Jats put on their camels are as follows.

Camel Bridle (Mahaar)

It is sort of a thin rope, or string which is tied around the mouth and through the nose of camel to control its steering. Camel bridles get special treatment in the community of the Jats. Camel bridle is woven by hand except the part which is attached to the head which is made of leather. Jats make a beautiful *Mahaars* (Bridles) which steers the direction of the camel. Some Jats make

covers.

The camel knee cover is always decorated with geometric designs. The popular geometric designs that are employed are *swastika*, cross locally called Madhani, triangle (*trikundo*), rectangular (*mustatel*) square (*choki or choras*) zig-zag, (*warwakar*) star (*taro*) etc which have apparently been inspired from Relli (patchwork). Actually, these designs are popularly used on Relli from where artists take the inspiration.

Camel Cover or blanket (Jhull)

Jats cover the body of their camels with colourful *jhulls*. There are two types of *jhulls* that Jats use for their camels. One is simple made of textile cloth and the other is embroidered *jhull*. Most of the Jats use simple colourful *jhulls* to decorate their camels. A few Jats put embroidered *jhulls* on their camels. Jats rarely buy *jhulls* from the market rather they make these at home. However, embroidered *jhulls* are sold in markets from where Jats purchase them. Nowadays, embroidered *jhulls* are no more in vogue. In the former times, camels were adorned with embroidered *jhulls* at the wedding ceremonies and other festivities. The designs that are made on the *jhulls* vary from tribe to tribe. One can easily identify the tribe that has made the *jhull* by looking at the designs. So, motifs create the identity of the maker of the *jhulls*. Hindus of Tharparkar also use colourful *jhulls* for their camels (Fig.33).

Camel face pendant: (Morr)

Morr is also put on the camel. Many Jats still use *morr* for their camels. They put the *morr* on the camel on special events like Eid. Camels are also decorated with face pendant when these are taken to camel fairs for selling.

the beaded garlands. Beaded garlands are also used to decorate their camels by the Jat community in Badin. Jats of Badin profusely adore beaded garlands.

Camel Neck Band: (Gachi Wari Pati)

A Jat likes to adorn his camels with neck bands. There are three types of camel neck bands found on the camels of Jats, un-decorated, beaded and decorated. Every Jat in the village of Digano Jamali decorates his camels with un-decorated neck bands. The undecorated neck bands lack ornamentation. But the colours make un-decorated bands more attractive. The Jats intentionally use loud colours to make neck band.

A few camels are bedecked with decorated neck bands. Locally, decorated neck bands are called *Seengarial Pati* or *Barat Wari Pati* (an embroidered neck band). The only line of difference that one can draw between decorated and embroidered neck bands is a flannel or tassel locally known as *thalia*. The decorated neck bands sometimes carry flannels whereas embroidered neck bands don't have flannels.

A beaded neck band occupies a very important place among the Jats of Digano Jamali. A few camels are adorned with beaded camels especially those which are taken for dancing, riding and racing. Camels which are taken to camel fairs are also decorated with beaded neck bands.

Camel Knee cover: (Gode Dakani)

The Jats use decorated knee cover for their camels. Only the Jats of Digano Jamali adorn their camels with *gode dakani* (Camel knee cover). It is not found in the neighbouring villages of Jats. In former times, Jats of the neighbouring villages also used to make camel knee

or runs.

Plann (Wooden frame)

A *plann* is placed over the camel either for sitting or placing luggage. The front and back of the *plann* is always decorated with embroidery in combination with mirror.

Kajawo (Wooden Frame)

Kajawo is always made of wood. It is placed over the camel for sitting. Kajawo is different from *plann* in the sense that it is only used for sitting and not for keeping the luggage much larger than *plann*. It is always adorned with embroidery and mirrors. Kajawo is locally available in every Jat village. The price of *Kajawo* ranges from Rs.1000 to 3000 depending upon the quality and decoration.

Bell (Charo)

The bells are highly important artifacts in the material culture of Jats. Jats put a bell on almost every camel. The ringing of bells produces very rhythmic sound. According to local perspective, movement of camel is gauged by the ringing of the bells. The sound of every bell is different from the other. Jats recognize the name of the camel by the ring tone of bells.

When it comes to bells, the emphasis is not on the perception of the bells but rather on its production. Children are also urged by their fathers to learn about their family bells and their history, and feel proud of them. Bells symbolize different elements of male identity, operating as symbols of masculinity; pastoralism and patriline. The circulation of bells through the male line across generations is related to local ideas of cultural continuity and the reproduction of social order. That is

Camel headdress: (mathe dak)

Jats use headdresses for their camels fondly (Fig 34). Almost every Jat in the village has a headdress for his camel. They invariably decorate the camel with headdress when they go riding. Apart from this, they also adorn the camel with headdress during the dance competition.

The headdresses are made by Jats at home and are also sold in markets. Moreover, they also give as gift to their fellow Jats. Each headdress costs between Rs.500 to 1000.

Camel Relhi (Patchwork appliqué)

Rellis is also an important ornament of a camel which is placed either over *plann* or behind it. Most beautiful Rellis are used by Jats. These Rellis carry most interesting and amazing designs. However, geometric and pictorial designs predominate.

Chest Band (seeni wari pati)

There are two types of chest bands that are used by Jats. One is decorated and other is simple. A decorated band is always embroidered whereas simple band lacks ornamentation. Besides, leather band is also used.

Pack Band (saman ji badhan wari pati)

These days, no decorated pack bands are used. In former times, these were in vogue. Nowadays, ropes have replaced the decorated pack bands.

Camel ankle rings (keruyun)

The Jats also adorn their camels with ankle rings which are made of silver. Almost every Jat in the village put *keruyun* (ankle rings) around camels' ankles. These *keruyun* produce very rhythmic sound when camel walks

knowledge about the flowers that they make on the camel coat. Apart from lotus flower (*Paban jo Gul*) and Sun flower (*Suraj Mukhi*), all other flowers are identified by the number of leaves (*pan*). The following flowers are made on camel coat.

The lotus is the favourite flower of Jats. On almost every camel this flower is found. This flower is a symbol of purity and beauty for Jats. The *rellis* made by Jats also carry the designs of lotus in a variety of forms. Their dwellings are also sometimes painted with lotus.

Apart from lotus, the patterns of sunflower are also created on camel. There is no hard and fast rule that follows the space principles. The artist makes sunflower pattern wherever he wishes to create. Likewise, there is no a relationship between specific space and design. Sometimes, sunflower pattern is made below the hump and sometimes on the belly. However, the artist is more careful about the symmetry.

Flower with four leaves (Char petin or panan waro gul) is also made. Flower with eight leaves (ath panan waro gul) is more commonly used. In addition to this, creeper designs are made as well. Besides, floral designs one can also see the pattern of a butterfly on the camel coat.

Above-mentioned flowers are patterned on camel coat by Jats in the villages of Digano Jamali and Bakhar Jamali.

Apart from floral designs one can also find some geometric designs on the camel coat prominent amongst which are cross, triangle, rectangle and square.

As far as inspiration is concerned, it has come from different directions. They have taken most of inspiration from their *rellis* (patchwork applique). They imitated designs from *rellis*. Apart from this, they have also taken

why bells are invaluable possessions. Some villagers maintained that bells were their gold and jewels. The quantity and quality of a camel's bells signal their power and honour. Every camelman has to protect them, in order to protect his name as a good camelman and a real man.

Patterns (Chitt) on Camel Skin

The attachment of Jats to their camels can be seen in terms of mesmerizing designs made on the body of camels that are captivatingly remarkable (Fig.35). The hair cut on the camel is so beautifully that it virtually looks like a piece of art. From a distance, it looks that a *relli*, patchwork appliqué, is placed on the camel. But when it approaches, one stands still to thoroughly mull over the designs that are interestingly fashioned (Fig.36).

The practice of making patterns on the body of a camel is common in and around the village of Digano Jamali. The whole body of the camel, including neck and tail is skilfully patterned. Mostly camels that have more hair are opted for creating patterns, while others are decked out with colourful cloths and trappings. The scissors is the only instrument that is used for making amazing patterns on the body of a camel. Jats begin to create patterns on the camel either in the last week of February or in the first week of March. In these months, weather in the village begins to get pleasant which is ideal for making patterns.

Floral designs are commonly created on the body of the camel. In former times, pictorial designs were also in vogue. The designs of birds notably peacock, parrots, sparrow were fondly created. In the past two decades Jats have stopped making these designs. However, they preferably use floral designs on camel coat. Jats have full

symbol of status. Nowadays, few people in the village and beyond use the camel for riding.

Camel Racing

Camel racing is a major source of entertainment for the Jats of New Saeedabad. Camel racing is held mostly on the eve of festivals. Besides, Jats also arrange monthly camel racing in which betting is also done. People keep two things in mind while betting on the camel racing. First, they assess the previous record of that camel to check the number of races it has won and second, they enquire about the the rider of the camel. Generally, the betting runs into hundreds and thousands but does not exceed lacs. There is only one example in which one Jat betted more than one lac on his camel and won that race.

Camel racing is a test for young Jats who demonstrate their masculinity in the race. If he wins the race, he constructs his masculinity. His victory in the race transforms him into a responsible adult who can take good care of his father's profession. Through this victory, he gets new identity in the community of Jats. Family lavishly celebrates his victory. A feast invariably follows in which relatives from far-flung areas are invited to celebrate the event. He puts on very costly dress on this occasion. Afterwards, he enjoys a very prestigious position in the community.

If the Jat loses the race, he loses his honour. In order to regain his and his family's honour, he makes serious preparation the whole year to win the race. The father or distant relatives train the young Jat for the race. Either the relative comes to young Jat's village or the latter travels to relative's village to get training. He stays there for a month or so before the camel racing. Sometimes, the father of camel rider pays the trainer either in kind or cash. If the trainee wins the race, first and foremost, he

inspiration from the necropolis of Talpurs located at Khudabad. Khudabad was once the capital of Sindh during the rules of Kalhora and Talpurs respectively. The dilapidated and deserted town of Khudabad is located about three km southwest of New Hala. There exist beautiful mausoleum and stone carved tombs famous for their superb craftsmanship. So, Jats have been greatly inspired from the designs which had been made on the stone carved graves. The similar designs are also made on the camel.

Some inspiration also comes from glazed pottery makers of Hala. Jats have daily interaction with these craftsmen and observe the designs that are made on the ceramics. They make similar designs on their camels, once they observe the ceramics of Hala.

Apart from Bakhar and Digano Jamali village, the practice of creating patterns on camel coat is popular everywhere in Sindh. During the Eid-ul- Azha, people from different villages in Sindh take their decorated camels to camel market in Karachi where they are sold. The owners of the camels create beautiful designs to attract the customers (Figs 37, 38 and 39).

Camel Riding

Camel is also used for riding in the village (Fig.40). Many older Jats still do camel riding. They avoid using modern means of transport and rely on traditional means of transport. If they have to go to a nearby village to meet their relatives, they prefer to go riding a camel. In the morning, older Jats ride a camel to neighbouring town to purchase the items of daily use.

In the former times, the landlords of the village were very fond of camel riding and preferably rode on lavishly decorated camel which was then considered a

the tune of popular music. There is a lot of hustle bustle during the camel dancing. The owners of the camels bring their camels lavishly adorned with decorative ornaments and eye-catching patterns to the Festivals.

The riders enjoy a very important and prestigious position in the culture of Jats. They are very influential persons in the community. Jats take their advice in almost all matters relating to the camels dancing.

An award (*inam*) is given to the owner of best dancing camel at the end of the dance competition. People always congratulate the winner who sometimes invites the friends to his village to celebrate the victory. Most of the Jats hire riders for camel dancing and pay them handsome amount. The numbers of Jats who ride themselves and make the camel dance are very few.

Patterns of Identity

Jats almost know the origin of every design on the body of a camel. Each of the design is identified with place of origin, for instance Larri gul is the name of flower that has been brought from the area of Larr that is Badin and Thatta. Similarly, Pai Gul is the design that has been brought from the village in Dadu. Apart from these, Parkari, Tharelo, Kachelo, Narai, Kohistani designs are commonly used by the Jats of Digano Jamali.

Parkari design consists of various flowers and creepers that grow in the area of Nagarparkar and that is how the design got its name. People of Nagarparkar create various designs on the body of camel. The generic term for the designs that are common in the areas of Nagarparkar is known as Parkari.

Various designs that people of Thar make on the bodies of their camels are popularly known as Tharelo. Mostly the tribes that inhabit the areas of Islamkot,

would pay regards to his teacher.

There are many popular shrines in Sindh where camel racing is held at the time of the Mela. Apart from the camel racing, horse, donkey and bull racing are also held. However, camel racing being prominent among these is held at the following shrines.

- Shrine of Oderolal in Hyderabad
- Shrine of Sajan Sawai in Badin
- Shrine of Muhammad Shah in Matiari
- Shrine of Baloo Faqir Rind in Nawabshah
- Shrine of Hoat Faqir Rind in Sanghar
- Shrine of Mian Nasir Muhammad in Dadu
- Shrine of Gaji Shah in Dadu
- Shrine of Bahleel Shah in Dadu
- Shrine of Mian Yar Muhammad in Dadu
- Shrine of Allah Dad Faqir Lund in Dadu
- Shrine of Nuh Hothiani in Matiari
- Shrine of Jaral Shah Matiari
- Shrine of Yousaf Shah in Matiari
- Shrine of Pir Bilawali in Matiari
- Shrine of Rukunddin in Matiari
- Shrine Wali Muhammad Khan Leghari in Tando Allahyar
- Shrine of Bukera Sharif in Tando Allahyar
- Shrine of Ismail Qadri in Tando Muhammad Khan
- Shrine of Shah Turial alias Tajuddin in Badin
- Shrine of Razi Shah in Mithi

Camel Dancing

Camel dancing is also a very important and colourful event during the Melas (Festivals). People come from far flung areas to participate in this event. Famous and renowned riders make the camel dance in the Melas to

brightly coloured dresses. The traditional Jats who are engaged in the occupation of camel breeding still wear dresses that give colourful look. The schemes of colours that exist in the Jat culture are red, black, green and blue.

Jats are equally choosy for their camels when it comes to colours. They put very colourful clothes on their camels. They have a very interesting system of colours that they have worked out for their camels. Red is the favourite colour of Jats for their camels. This colour resembles blood and therefore is the symbol of life, happiness, transformation and nostalgia. One of the Jats commented that he always puts on the red *jhull* (blanket) and other ornaments on his camel because red is symbol of nostalgia for him. Whenever, he saw red colour, he recalled his first night of marriage. At the first night of marriage his wife was wearing red wedding dress.

The Jats usually put red *jhull* over the young male camel. According to them, the red colour makes the camel more beautiful and attractive whereas the female camel is adorned with *jhull* of the green colour. The green colour is a symbol of fertility and prosperity for the Jats. White colour is always opted for the older camels. White is the symbol of tranquility and peace for the Jats.

The blue and black *jhulls* and other accessories are put on any time or during some event but there is no fixed period or pre-fixed event. Black *jhull* is, sometimes, is tied to the camel to ward off the evil spirits.

Beauty Competition

An annual competition of decorated camels is also held in which Jats from far-flung areas come to attend the event. This competition is held in the village of Muhammad Shah in the Aderi Belo area of Nawabshah

Chhachro, Mithi, Umarnot, Khipro and Veejhar, use Tharelo designs on the camel coat. However, some Jats from Digano Jamali and Bakhar Jamali brought the designs from these areas and introduced them in their own locales.

Kachelo designs are found in the area of Dadu and Larkana popularly known as Kachho. Jats of Digano Jamali have kinship ties with the Jats of Kachho. Their frequent interaction with the Jats of Kachho made the entry of this design convenient and possible. Today, Kachelo design comprises flowers and creepers only. However, in the past it also included bird and animal representations.

Naro is the name of area of Thar and is tehsil of Khairpur district. The designs that are commonly used in this area are called Narai. The Narai designs also comprise various flowers and creepers.

Finally, Kohistani designs are also found on the camels of Jats of Digano Jamali. Designs that are found and used in the mountainous regions of Sindh are generally called Kohistani.

This scheme of local designs almost carries the list of the same flowers. The only difference that one can observe is the shape and size of flower, or the flower enclosed by geometric design or surrounded by smaller flowers and creepers. These features make one scheme distinct from the other.

Colour Symbolism

The colour also occupies an important position in the culture of Jat. Jat males and females usually like to wear loud colours, colours that are visible and conspicuous from distance. Modern Jats who have given up the profession of camel tending and breeding do not wear

a brand (Dagh) indicating its ownership. The brand is stamped on either side of the neck, just above the foreleg, forehead or cheek of camel. This tradition is transferred or inherited through generations. The brand or stamp is locally known as Thapo, Marko, Dagh or Nishan. The brand of Jamalis Jats in Bakhar and Digano Jamali villages almost resemble with English alphabet *W* and locally this brand is called *Singar* whereas the brand of Brahmani Jats is Swastika locally called *Mandhani* (churning stick). Apart from this, there are at least five brands of camels found in the village of Digano Jamali. These brands are marked on those camels that Jats have bought from other tribes. However, Jats do not scrape the brand of the tribe from whom camel was bought.

The brand or sign system is widely practiced in Sindh. Almost every district of Sindh is inhabited with tribes that mark their livestock with symbols or signs that indicate the ownership. One can argue by looking at these symbols that they resemble the Indus script. Furthermore, these symbols might be the continuity of the Indus script.

Role of artist in the community

Artists are greatly respected by Jats. Senior or experienced artists are more respectable for Jats than junior artists. Senior artists wield great power in the community of Jats. They have great influence over everyday life of Jats. Jats seek advice from these artists before starting any activity. Even matrimonial problems are openly discussed with these people by Jats. These problems are discussed in the hope of finding a viable solution.

Jats always seek advice before taking part in camel race or dance. It is he (artist) who decides whether to take part in the race or not. Furthermore, he is supposed to

District. The renowned Jats of the area arrange this beauty competition. This austentatious activity begins early in the morning and ends in the evening. Camel dancing and racing also takes place on this occasion.

Camels that participate in the beauty competition do not dance or race. They only stand at one particular place where people come and see these lavishly decorated camels. At the end of activity an award is given to the person who has decorated his camel most beautifully. Five experienced Jats who act as judges announce the award. Two criterions are taken into account while announcing the winner. One, they see that the camel is adorned with its best of ornaments ranging from *jhull* to small necklaces. Apart from this more attention is paid to the body of a camel which is also decorated with mesmerizing patterns. These patterns hugely captivate the onlookers. The camel which carries the most beautiful patterns on its coat wins the first prize (Fig.41). Five to ten thousand rupees are awarded to the winner. No trophy or other things are conferred.

Innovation

The main characteristic of an established artist is that he consistently introduces innovative ideas. Jats like and respect this type of experienced artist. He has the ability to add new motifs and designs to already available scheme of designs in the Jat culture.

A flower or geometric design that was never before used on the camels makes the artist an innovator. The established artists have made available a number of new designs for the novice or their apprentices.

Camel Brands (Dagh or Nishan)

Every camel in village Digano Jamali is marked with

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find or finalize the name of rider for the camel race. If the artist selects the rider for race Jat is sure to win. Nobody objects to his decision.

He also hands down the centuries old tradition of camel decoration to his juniors or young Jats. During the months of March and April, his otak (a space exclusively reserved for males) is full of new artists who come from far-flung areas to learn to make patterns on the camel coat. When he creates patterns on the camel, the young Jat observes the activity very seriously and attentively. He keeps telling his apprentices regarding the technique, a space from where to start the patterns and various designs that he makes on the camel. If apprentices don't get the point, they intermittently ask from their teacher. Apprentices get to learn this art in a year or two. Senior artist does not get payment for the training. He only gets payment for the camel decoration. He finishes creating patterns on the camel in two or three days. Each camel costs Rupees 2000 to 4000. Some artists decorate the camel of their friends and relatives free of cost. However, friends or relatives pay them on their own.

After getting an apprenticeship, the fresh trainee begins to decorate his own camels, and then the ones belonging to the relatives. With passage of time the hard work pays off and they become skilled artists who are able to decorate the camels of other people. When they become fully established artists, they arrange a large gathering of renowned Jats who come and acknowledge their works. In this gathering, camel owners are invited to see and comment on their work.

the message of Imams of Ahlebaiyt a.s. and how this served as a formal and informal training center. It also traced the construction of one Zareeh and Shabeeh that later resulted in the creation of many such Zareehs and Shabeehs through Zaireen (visitors).

Sindh is host to a number of religious buildings. Almost every important town and village has holy shrines associated with both Shias and Sunnis. They are frequented by people on a number of occasions to seek the blessings and prayers for fulfillment of their wishes. This paper investigates the role of holy shrines to educate and teach people about Imam Mahdi a.s. This research is based on my fieldwork which I conducted in the months of December and January 2012 and 2013 respectively. However, I have been conducting research on these holy shrines associated with Shia faith since 2008. Anthropological research tools like in-depth interviews, participant observation were adopted to get information from the respondents regarding the perception, rituals and outcomes of the visitors to the Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak (holy shrines) in the districts of Khairpur and Hyderabad. Zareeh and Shabeeh are replicas of the holy shrines of Imam Ali a.s, Imam Hussain a.s and other Imams a.s. Prior to discussing the role of these Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak in educating people about the Twelve Imams a.s, it is necessary to have an insight into the historical development of these Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak in Sindh. The first Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak (replica of Imam Husain's shrine at Karbala) was constructed at Tando Agha in Hyderabad. It is believed to have been constructed by Mir Fateh Ali Khan Talpur in 1785. Mir Fateh Ali Khan Talpur was the founder of the Talpur dynasty, a dynasty which practised the Shia faith. Another Zareeh Mubarak was constructed at Tando Noor

Role of Holy Shrines and Spiritual Arts in People's Education about Mahdism

Introduction

The idea of education or educating the masses is a vital force in bringing a change in any society of a country. In broader perspective education is considered as an essential instrument in transforming the very basis of society in terms of creating opportunities and awareness among the people. This paper is the first-ever exploration of a unique way that helps people's education about Mahdism faith, and its requirements. That is, construction of Shabeeh and Zareeh Mubarak [a replica of shrines of Imam Hussain a.s. and Imam Ali a.s and other Aemma a.s] in Khairpur and Hyderabad districts of Sindh, Pakistan. The study uses multiple methodologies to collect the data which include review of unpublished data and literature, and still photography of the holy shrines and places of spiritual importance. Besides these tools, a questionnaire is administered to collect key information regarding the perceptions, practices and feedback of the visitors [zaireen] of these holy places where any Zareeh or Shabeeh has been constructed. The study explores how the visitors receive any explicit or implicit education about the 12th Imam Muhammad Al-Mahdi when they visit these holy places. The study also explains how a Zareeh or a Shabeeh or other holy place also acted as an institute where a series of lectures and trainings were provided to both Shias and Sunnis in order to understand

occasions of Muharram or on the visit by the foreign guests. These square buildings were now replaced by rectangular buildings and more rooms were added. One such rectangular building over a Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak of Imam Hussain a.s. was constructed at Khairpur (Fig.43&44). This Shabeeh Mubarak was constructed by the last ruler of Khairpur state. It is believed to have first been built in 1953 and later renovated in 1970 (Hami 1994:242).

Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak of Imam Husain

This replica of Imam Hussain's shrine is a rectangular building which was constructed by the last Talpur ruler of Khairpur state. There are three elegant porticoes at the entrance into the building. The main gate which opens to the west is named after Imam Ali (Fig.45). A beautiful wooden painted gate, known as Imam Hussain gate, opens to the Shabeeh and Zareeh Mubarak of Imam Hussain. This is the Shabeeh (replica) of Imam Hussain's a.s shrine at Karbala. Near the Shabeeh Mubarak is located a hall where sermons and lectures are delivered to the faithful.

According to the royal family of Talpurs of Khairpur, Mir Murad Ali Talpur, the last ruler of Khairpur State sent two of his masons to Karbala in 1953 to visit the holy shrine and bring the imitated design to be reconstructed as a replica at Khairpur. It is believed that when they came back after pilgrimage from Karbala, they began constructing the building the same year. The building and replica were made by these two masons. The façade of the building is flanked by two minarets resembling the holy shrine of Imam Hussain.

Perceptions and Rituals at Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak

Many people visit Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak daily. Some people come from Khairpur and

Muhammad in Hyderabad. Apart from these, Shabeeh Mubarak of Imam Hussain's a.s shrine using only wood was made at Tando Mir Muhammad in Hyderabad (Fig.42).

However, Shabeehs at Tando Agha and Tando Noor Muhammad were made of gold generously provided by the Talpur rulers of Sindh (Hami 1994: 126). The Talpur rulers of Sindh constructed Zareehs and Shabeehs for the poor people who could not afford to visit the holy shrines of Imam Hussain at Karbala, Imam Ali at Najaf and Imam Ali Reza at Mashhad. In the beginning only a few people visited these shrines but within a few years this number swelled to a great extent and few more Zareehs and Shabeehs Mubaraks were constructed by Talpur rulers in other towns of Sindh for the convenience of the visitors. These replicas of the holy shrines of Imams a.s served two purposes initially. The first was that these acted as symbolic representation of the original shrines at Karbala, Najaf and Mashhad where people came to visit daily and the second was that religious lectures were arranged regularly to educate the people about the religion. Therefore, these Zareehs served dual functions of shrines and to some extent of *madrassa*. This continued up to 1980. After that, a new trend took place when Zareehs, Shabeehs and *madrassa* were built separately. As mentioned above, earlier Zareehs served both purposes of holy shrines and *madrassas*. This does not mean that special lecture series ceased in these Zareehs. Also a new style of architecture emerged. Earlier a square building mainly comprising two square rooms were built over the Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak. In the first room there was a Zareeh and Shabeeh and the second contained the valuable gifts given by the Talpur rulers to Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak which were displayed on special

various aspects of religion. The principle objective is to enhance their knowledge about the religious teachings of the Imams, educate piety and strengthen their faith.

The lecture series has left a positive impact on both sects Shias and Sunnis. The first important thing that religious authorities teach is tolerance among the religious sects. With passage of time both have shown visible forbearance for each other and have created some space for discussion on the host of issues related to the Twelve Imams a.s. Interestingly, its not only the lectures that serve as food for thought, some poets too have composed captivating poetry on the twelve Imams a.s. This is unpublished literature and very few people are familiar with its contents. In the past during the reign of the Talpurs these Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubaraks provided space to the poets who after attending the lectures which were then arranged by the royal family of the Talpurs, composed poetry on the Imams a.s. Themes of this poetry were Imam Husain a.s and Karbala, Imam Ali a.s and his bravery, and Imam Mahdi a.s and his appearance.

This tradition still continues but is not organized as it was during the reign of the Talpurs and even in the British period. The poetry on the Imams a.s is still being composed. These holy places of Zareeh and Shabeeh play dual roles; 1) these provide opportunity to the visitors for *Ziarat* and 2) simultaneously, educate people about the religion which is peculiarity of holy spaces in Sindh only. Normally, this takes place in the *Madrassa* where religious education is taught to the students and it is also being taught through a series of lectures at the holy places of Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak in different towns of Sindh.

neighbouring villages and towns and the others come from far-flung villages and towns of different districts of Sindh. This Shabeeh and Zareeh are greatly venerated by people. They believe that their visit to this holy place redresses their everyday problems. This belief increased their visits to the holy place of Shabeeh and Zareeh Mubarak. Most of the people bring their ailing children to the holy place of Zareeh Mubarak carrying a strong belief that as soon as they would touch the replica of Imam Husain's shrine their children would heal instantly. The parents of not only ailing children but those who wish for their first child also visit the Zareeh Mubarak. The main rituals performed at the holy place of Zareeh Mubarak are the prayers (namaz) and Manat (vow). In order to have their wishes fulfilled by Imam Hussain a.s, devotees tie the threads at his Zareeh Mubarak. Apart from these the ritual of *Areezon* is also performed on the auspicious day of 15th Sha'ban. On this day people write *Areezon* (pleas or requests) to Imam Mahdi a.s and leave their pleas written on the paper near the replica of Imam Hussain's shrine.

The timings of Ziarat of Shabeeh and Zareeh Mubarak are from 8:00 a.m to 5:00 pm. A routine lecture is delivered in the evening on different aspects of religion attended by both Shias and Sunnis. Every Thursday and Friday evenings, special lectures are arranged on the Twelve Imams a.s for which a religious scholar is invited to give a talk on the lives of the Twelve Imams a.s. The basic idea behind these lectures is to educate the people who do not know much about their religion and how it is to be practiced. In this age of globalization, majority of the people have become addicted to entertainment programmes on the electronic media. The caretakers of Shabeeh and Zareeh invite the general public in order to create awareness among the people and lecture them on

history of the Talpurs, the sacred footprints of Imam Ali a.s were given by the Iranian King to Mir Fateh Ali Talpur (1783-1795). Mir Fateh Ali Talpur preserved them at Hyderabad and later built an impressive building over them.

The Talpur ruler built a special room inside *Pucca Qila* (fort) for these holy footprints beside a mosque for *ziyarat*. After *namaz* (prayers) on Thursday night the women of the Talpur family used to visit to see these footprints. The common people had no chance to see them except on *Eid of Nauroz*.

The last ruler of the Talpur dynasty in Sindh Mir Naseer Khan Talpur (1829-1843), on the request of the people, built a shrine of footprints of Imam Ali a.s and placed these stones in it, where people could see them. This shrine was open to the general public. Before the partition of India and Pakistan, this place was known as “Shah ja Qadam” (footprints of Shah) but with the passage of time it became known as “Qadamgah Imam Ali a.s”.

The visitors and devotees come not only from Pakistan but from India, Afghanistan and many other countries for paying tribute to relics of Imam Ali a.s. All the devotees come to pray and to seek fulfillment of their hearts wishes. Their wishes are based on their devoted beliefs about Qadamgah (Figs. 46&47).

There are many sacred places at Qadamgah Imam Ali a.s which include: shrine of the footprints of Imam Ali a.s, *Alam Pak*, *Shabeeh* of shrine of Hazrat Ghazi Abbas Alamdar a.s (Fig.48). All these sacred places are crowded with people who come to pray. Apart from these holy spaces, relics donated by different influential people have also been kept in one of the halls of the shrine which is open for the devotees. These relics include the glazed

Explicit and implicit Education about Imam Mahdi

Those who visit the Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak of Khairpur and Hyderabad also get educated about Imam Mahdi a.s. Usually people go to the caretaker of the Zareeh and Shabeeh (shrine) who is also a very knowledgeable person to seek further knowledge. If anyone is interested to know more about Imam Mahdi a.s, he/she can easily access the booklets for reading that are available in plenty. Those interested are also given information about the lecture series on the twelfth Imam a.s which is arranged by the caretaker of Zareeh Mubarak. The basic idea of arranging lectures related specially to the Twelfth Imam a.s is to inculcate in the young generation who are more prone to entertainment like movies etc, values and traditions of the renowned religious leaders. The audience comprises both Sunnis and Shias. In a religiously tolerant society of Sindh both Shias and Sunnis attend the lectures together in order to create interfaith harmony. Therefore, holy spaces act as both a shrine for worship and an institute for imparting religious knowledge. This identity of the shrine as an institute led to construction of many small and large Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak in different towns of Sindh. Additionally, quite a large number of Shabeeh and Zareeh Mubarak too were constructed in Khairpur, Sukkur and Hyderabad districts. These replicas of holy shrines provide background knowledge to the people about Ahlebaiyt a.s. Moreover, people also get lessons on Imam Mahdi at various shrines and sacred footprints of Imam Ali a.s (Qadamgah Imam Ali a.s). The prominent Qadamgah of Imam Ali a.s is located in Hyderabad. These footprints were brought from Iran to Hyderabad during the reign of Mir Fateh Ali Khan Talpur who was a friend of Fateh Ali Qajar of Iran. According to the family

Many sacred things associated with holy shrines of Imam Ali a.s, Imam Hussain a.s, Hazrat Abbas a.s are safely placed in the separate rooms at the holy shrine of Qadimgah Imam Ali a.s. Some pebble stones of Samarra also placed in the shrine. These items are venerated by people who visit Qadimgah. Apart from the footprints of Imam Ali a.s, replica of his Shabeeh Mubarak has also been shielded in the shrine where people come to pay homage and pray at the Zareeh Mubarak. They come to get the blessings of Imam Ali a.s. Close to the Zareeh is *jhoola* (cradle) of Ali Asghar a.s (Fig. 49) which is made of metal. The wooden cradle of Ali Aghar a.s (Fig. 50) can be found in the Zareeh (Fig.51) and Shabeeh Mubarak of Imam Hussain a.s at Kot Diji (Fig.52) which was made by the Mir Faiz Muhammad, the ruler of Khairpur State (Hami 1994: 245). There are some valuable objects at this Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak which were donated by the royal family of Talpurs. This is the second largest Zareeh Mubarak in Sindh after Khairpur. The Zareeh Mubarak and Shabeeh of Kot Diji are only visited by the royal family members of Talpur dynasty. This Zareeh Mubarak is close to the royal palace of the Talpurs. Due to security reasons, only the royal family members have access to the shrine. The general public can only visit the Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak at Khairpur which was also built by the Talpur ruler.

All these Zareehs, Shabeehs and sacred spaces associated with footprints of Imam Ali a.s served as informal training centres to the Zaireen (visitors). Over a period of time, these holy places of Zareeh resulted in construction of numerous small and large Zareehs at various places in Sindh. These Zareehs and Shabeehs of Imam Husain's a.s shrine provided spiritual links

tiles, coverings of the shrines of Imams a.s and many others things.

This is also a holy shrine for both Shias and Sunnis where they also get in-depth understanding about various aspects of religion including the twelfth Imam, Imam Mahdi a.s. Today, this is one of the holiest shrines in Sindh frequented not only by Muslims but also by Hindus and Christians who are regular visitors. The Hindus and Christians believe that Imam Ali is Wali (friend) of Allah and he would solve their problem if they visit the shrine regularly. It is one of the peculiarities of Sindhi society where people belonging to different religions, castes and creeds visit the footprint shrine of Imam Ali a.s. The visitors tie pieces of cloth as Manat (plea) at the Zareeh Mubarak of Hazrat Abbas Alamdar. People also tie pieces of cloth at the Zareeh Mubarak and pray at Zareeh Mubarak. These people also attend the lectures which often are held at the Qadamgah Imam Ali a.s. According to the caretaker of the shrine, many people have converted to Islam after regularly attending these lectures. The lectures include various topics on Islam and some of these throw light on twelve Imams a.s. Similar lectures are also held at the shrine. The Hindu and Christians too believe that Imam Mahdi a.s is real Messiah who will appear soon and will solve their problems. This belief draws many people to shrine to attend the lectures, get convinced and subsequently convert to Islam.

It was at this holy shrine of Qadamgah Imam Ali a.s that many eminent poets of Talpur period (1783-1843) composed soul searching poetry on Ahlebaiyt a.s. One finds a large number of poems being composed by Talpur period poets. Even in the British period (1843-1947), one finds several poets composing poetry on Imam Mahdi a.s.

growth of these holy shrines. First, the greater Iranian influence on Shia community in Sindh has resulted in erection of additional Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubaraks. The structures over these holy relics also resemble the Iranian architecture. Second, the rich Shia businessmen have contributed generously to the growth of the holy shrines in Sindh as without their financial support this activity would not have been possible. The apparent motive behind these sponsorships is to build a network of holy shrines to impart religious education and subsequently convert non-Shia population to Shia doctrine.

between Imams a.s and his followers. Through his Zareeh and Shabeeh, Zaireen (visitors) spiritually felt to be at holy shrines of Imam Ali a.s at Najaf, Imam Hussain's a.s shrine at Karbala and Imam Reza a.s at Mashhad.

The artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were influenced by the art of painting of the shrines. As such they painted the walls of holy shrines, tombs and mosques. The earliest mosque that depicts the holy shrines of the Imams a.s is located at Qubo Shahdad in Sanghar district of Sindh. Apart from the mosque, one finds a number of tombs with the representations of the holy cities of Makkah, Madina, Karbala and Najaf in Kalhora (1700-1783) and Talpur period (1783-1843). This art of painting of holy shrines still continues. The more recent tomb, built in 2007 is of Shadi Shaheed in Khairpur district which illustrates important holy shrines and mosques of Islam. There are two rows of portraits of holy shrines and mosques on the domed ceiling of the tomb. The first row depicts the holy Kaaba, Masjid Nabawi etc. The second row represents the shrines of Imam Ali a.s (Fig.53), Imam Hussain a.s etc.

Conclusion

It is important to note that Shabeeh and Zareeh Mubaraks played a significant role in educating the people about the holy shrines of Imams a.s. The institutes like Zareeh and Shabeeh are conduits for spreading the messages of Islam. The education element in these holy places has been welcomed by the public desirous to understand their religion and has resulted in unprecedented construction of Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubaraks in small and large towns of Sindh. Almost every Imam Bargah in upper Sindh houses a Zareeh and Shabeeh Mubarak. There are two main factors that led to

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language was greatly valued in Sindh and the Persian scholars acquired higher status in Sindhi society. However, it was during the Soomra period (1055-1350) that the earliest Persian poetry by foreign settlers could be traced. The interaction of Sindhi scholars with Persian scholars opened the new vistas in the spheres of poetry and history. The Persian poets also flourished during the reigns of Arghuns (1520-1555), Tarkhans (1555-1590) and the Mughals (1590-1700) rulers of Sindh. However, it was during the reigns of the Kalhoras (1700-1783) and Talpurs (1783-1843) when the Persian poetry attained pinnacle of glory.

During these periods, direct relationship was established with the rulers of Iran and many Iranian poets came and became the court poets of Sindhi kings. When Nadir Shah invaded India and Sindh, he took along with him three Kalhora princes of Sindh to Mashhad, Iran. During their stay in Iran, they were influenced by Iranian culture and religion. When these princes returned to Sindh, one of them Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro who later became ruler of Sindh encouraged Persian scholars and fixed stipends for them. Later on, his son Mian Sarfraz became the new king of Sindh. He also encouraged Persian poets and many Persian poets from Isfahan and Shiraz arrived to become his court poets. Mian Sarfraz was a great Persian poet himself. He composed many *marsia* (elegies), *rubais*, *qasidas* (monody) etc. The Talpur rulers were followers of the Shia faith and many of them were poets of great repute themselves.

The earliest period in the history of Sindh in which some compositions in Persian poetry by the foreign settlers in this province can be traced, is the thirteenth century- the period of the Soomra Kings. Some of these

Depiction of Imam Mahdi in Sindhi poetry of Sindh

Introduction

This paper discusses the themes that Persian poets introduced in Sindh during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries and how they were incorporated in Sindhi poetry by Sindhi poets. The main themes during these centuries borrowed from Persian poets were the veneration of Imam Ali and the tragedy of Karbala. These two themes were main topics for Sindhi poets. Second, when direct relationship was established in the 18th and 19th centuries with Iran, Persian poets travelled from Iran and introduced another theme of Imam Mahdi in both Sindhi and Persian poetry of Sindh. This theme of Imam Mahdi remained predominant for later period poets in their poems. I have also described and discussed the names of those poets who composed poetry about Imam Mahdi. Lastly, I have also discussed how this theme of Imam Mahdi in Sindhi poetry became agent of change thus converting many to Shai faith.

Sindh, the southern province of Pakistan, remained under the Persian rule for many centuries. Right from the Achaemenians, Sassanians, and Parthians to Nadir Shah's time, Persian art and culture influenced the Sindhi society to a great extent. The Persian scholars had made their way into Sindh during the Ghaznavid dynasty, much before the foray of Nadir Shah in Sindh. Later in the Samma period (1351-1520), learning the Persian

the Persian poetry in India. There was hardly a poet of eminence during this period, most notable, however, being Shaikh Muhammad Ali “Hazin”, Syed Ahmed “Hatif” of Isfahan. During the reign of Prince Aurangzeb, there was little scope for Persian poetry. Moreover, the emergence of Urdu which had been in the process of development for a long time, gave a death blow to the Persian literature. A few solitary luminaries, however, continued a ray of light in the field of Persian literature in India (Baloch 2004, Sadarangani 1987). Paradoxically, however, this was the golden age of Persian poetry in the remote, incalculable province of Sindh. During the major part of the eighteenth century Sindh was governed by the Kalhoras (1700-1783), first as a tributary of Mughal Empire in Delhi and then as independent monarchs. In India more and more attention came to be given to Urdu and Persian poetry was almost completely neglected. It is difficult to name even a single great poet in this period (Laghari 1999; Sadarangani 1987; Junejo 1994).

Sindh by this time had passed from the hands of the Kalhoras to the Talpurs (1783-1843). Shia by faith, Talpurs established relationships with the Shah of Persia that saw influx of many Persian scholars into Sindh. With the fall of Talpur dynasty and the advent of the British (1843-1947) the Persian literature received a setback. However, as a result of strenuous efforts of some old scholars to keep Persian alive in the province, many poems were composed in Persian language.

Persian themes and their Adoption in Sindhi Poetry

Many Sindhi poets composed the poetry in their vernacular. The earliest classical literature of Sindhi language has been divided into the following poetic forms:

pieces are by Ali bin Hamid Kufi, the well-known writer of the *Chachnama* who arrived and settled in the province of Sindh in 1216 and the rest are by Shaikh Uthman-i-Marwandi, popularly known as Lal Shahbaz. The earliest Persian poets of Sindh, according to extant annals, are the indigenous writers Jam Juna, Shaikh Hammad Jamali, Shaikh Isa Langoti, Jam Nindo all of whom belong to the Samma period (1350-1520) (Laghari 1999; Sadarangani 1987:2). The rulers of succeeding dynasties of Arghuns and Tarkhans were also men of literary learnings. They opened several schools for the study of Persian and attracted to their court from Persia many poets and scholars like Hashimi Kirmani, Nimatuallah “Wasli”, Mulla Asad Qissa Khwan, Hakim Faghfur-i-Gilani, Mulla Murshid Burujirdi, Talib Amuli and Shayda Isfahani.

Later on Sindh was annexed to the Mughal Empire and came to be directly governed by the agents appointed by the Emperor of Delhi. Many Mughal agents or governors too for instance Nawab Amir Khan, Abu Nusart Khan, Mir Lutaf Ali Khan etc were poets and patrons of learning. Thatta, the capital of Sindh during the reigns of Sammas, Arghuns, Tarkhans and Mughals, was at the height of its renown and the cradle of Islamic culture and learning. During these periods, one gets the names of Idraki, Beglari and Haji Muhammad Redai who made an original contribution to the Mathnawi form by versifying the native tragedies of Lila wa Chanesar and Ziba wa Nigar (alias Sasui-wa-Punhun) respectively. Mir Masum Shah “Nami” wrote five Mathnawis in imitation of Nizami’s Punj Gunj. He also composed Diwan (Sadarangani 1987:4).

The eighteenth century is the “most barren” period in

the historians, but it is particularly Muhammad Muhsin, who lived in the old, glorious capital of Sindh, Thatta, with whose name is the Persian *marthiya/marsiain* Sindh connected (Schimmel 1986; Sandarangrani 1987; Abbas 1984). He composed a great number of Tarji'band and particularly *salam*, in which beautiful strong imagery can be perceived:

The boat of Mustafa's family has been drowned in blood,

The black cloud of infidelity has waylaid the sun

The candle of the Prophet was extinguished by the breeze of the Kufans

Muhammad Muhsin was a son of Nur Muhammad and belonged to the family of silk merchants of Thatta. He was by far the best poet of Thatta and wrote six books in Persian. He received fifteen Rupees from Mian Noor Muhammad Kalhoro (1719-1753) as a stipend, which though small kept him quite contented (Bhatti 2002:120). In one of his books, *Mihakk-I-Kamal* (the touchstone of perfection), which contained a collection of 13000 verses of different poets with his own 800 verses were dedicated to Mian Noor Muhammad Kalhoro entitled *Quli Khan* (Sadarangani 1987:93). Apart from *marthiya/marsia* he also composed many *mukhammas* (fivesome) in the praise of Hazrat Ali (A.S). Allama Muhammad Mui'n was another Persian poet who composed *marthiyas/marsia* and verses in the praise of Hazrat Ali (A.S). He called Hazrat Ali (A.S) in one of his verses as *Asadullah*, meaning "Lion of God." Later Mir Ali Sher Qaani, a Persian scholar and poet of Kalhora period developed different form of '*marthiya/ marsia* in 'question and answer style' (Schimmel 1986).

- a) Romantic Ballads
- b) Religious poetry
- c) Pseudo Romantic ballads
- d) Epic poetry and
- e) Customary and ceremonial songs

The forms in which the earlier poets expressed themselves are termed as classical. Makhdum Nuh (1505-1589) of Hala, Shah Karim of Bulri (1537-1628), Pir Muhammad Lakhvi (d.1600), Lutfullah Qadri (1611-1679), Shah Inayat Rizvi (d.1717), Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai (1689-1752), Khawaja Muhammad Zaman of Lunari (1713-1774) were the most renowned poets who composed verses with religious thought manifesting the yearning love of the human soul for divine (Allana 1991).

Prior to direct relationship with Iran in the 13th, 15th and 16th centuries, poets came either from India and some from Iran and settled in Sindh. Some became court poets of the Sindhi kings. The themes mainly dealt with love, natural happenings, natural beauty, and romances etc. In the first quarter of eighteenth century before Nadir Shah's foray into Sindh Persian poets introduced two more themes, veneration of Hazrat Ali (A.S) and the tragedy of Karbala. This was during the reign of Mian Noor Muhammad Kalhoro (1719-1753). Two poets during his rule composed Persian *marsia/marthiyas*. Therefore, the introduction of Persian *marthiya/marsia* and later its development in Sindh is connected with Kalhora period. However, Sindhi *marthiya* reached its pinnacle during the reign of the Talpurs.

Both Allama Muhammad Mui'n alais Makhdum Tharo (1682-1748) and Muhammad Muhsin were among the first *marthiya-gus* of Sindh mentioned by

Lord! may you grant victory to the princes so brave,
 Moreover poets raise question that those who do not
 grieve, will they be forgiven by God
 In his another poem:

Those whose hearts grieve not for Hasan and Husain
 Imam,

Can they be forgiven by Almighty, the lord of all.

Shah Abdul Latif's interpretation of the fate of the Imam Husain as a model of enduring pain and suffering of his beloveds and thus treading the mystical path is a deeply impressive piece of literature. It was never surpassed, although in his succession a number of poets composed elegies on Karbala. The most famous of them is Sabit Ali Shah (1740-1810) whose specialty was the poetic genre of *suwari*, the poem addressed to the rider Husain, who once as child had ridden on the Prophet's back and then was riding bravely into the battlefield (Schimmel 1986). This genre was developed by Syed Sabit Ali Shah who was the court poet of Mian Sarfaraz Khan Kalhor and later became a court poet of Mir Karam Ali Talpur. This genre, as well as the more common forms, persisted in Sindhi throughout the whole 18th and 19th centuries and even in British and contemporary times (Sachal Sarmast, Bedil Rohriwaro, Mir Hasan, Shah Nasir, Mirza Budhal Beg, Mirza Qalich Beg, to mention a few, some of whom were Sunni sufis). The *suwari* theme was lovingly elaborated by poet Mir Abdul Hasan Sangi, to whom Sindhi owes some very fine and touching songs in the honour of prince martyrs, and who strongly emphasizes the mystical aspects of the event of Karbala, Husain is here put in the relation with the Holy Prophet (Schimmel 1986).

The prince has made his miraj on the ground of Karbala,

What is raining? Blood
 Who? The eyes
 How? Day and Night
 Why? From grief
 Grief for the king of Karbala

The most interesting tradition along with Persian tradition was the development of *marthiya/marsia* in Sindhi. Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit (1689-1752) was the first to express ideas which were later taken up by other poets. He devoted sur Kedaro in his Risalo (a book of his poetry) to the martyrdom of the grandson of the Prophet and saw event of Karbala as embedded in whole mystical traditions of Islam. He brings his listeners to the moment when no news was heard from the heroes (Schimmel 1986):

The moon of Muharram was seen, anxiety about the princes occurred.

What has happened?

Muharram has come back, but the Imams have not come
 O princes of Medina, may the Lord bring us together.

In the same sur of Kedaro, he further describes the sufferings of Imams in the Karbala and puts it in the following words:

In Karbala's plain, Kufans prevented them from drinking
 water,

The princes then remembered Ali, their noble father,
 Coming out of their tents, glancing around, they call
 Prophet for help.

Shah Bhitai writes that everyone mourned on the martyrdom of the Imam Husain. He delineates in his poem that three creatures mourned:

Three types of creatures mourn Hasan and Husain,
 People in the homes, beasts in jungle, angles in heaven
 Birds in sorrow beat their wings for the loved ones have
 left,

Persian poets of Iran. Some Sindhi scholars believe that it was introduced for first time by Mian Sarfaraz Khan Kalhoro (1772-1776) son of Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro who composed *Rubais* on Imam Mahdi (Beg 1980:79). But based on the documented proof, one can safely argue that the theme of Imam Mahdi was first introduced by Muhammad Muhsin. He wrote five Persian books and one Diwan. One of his books *Tiraz-i-Danish* (Royal robe of knowledge), is a mathnavi which commemorates the birth of Imam Mahdi (Sadarangani 1986:92). But unfortunately his book is not available in any library of Pakistan to cite his work on Imam Mahdi.

Mian Sarfaraz Khan Kalhoro as mentioned above was son of Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro. Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro had married daughter of Ali Raza Isfahani in Iran when he was living as a hostage at the court of Nadir Shah. When Nadir Shah was killed in 1748, Mian Ghulam Shah returned to Sindh along with his Iranian wife. She bore him illustrious son Mian Sarfaraz. Mian Ghulam Shah (1757-1772) had also a great Iranian Influence. When he became king of Sindh, he installed *alams* in every important shrine in Sindh. However, the more prominent *alam* was installed in the shrine of Lal Shabaz Qalander (Beg 1980:126). When he constructed the Pucca fort of Hyderabad, he engraved the names of Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) and all Imams with clearly the name of Imam Mahdi on the stone slab of the main gate of the fort (Beg 1980:122) This reflected his reverence and devotion to all the Imams. Many Iranians became his ministers and court poets. Likewise, when Mian Sarfaraz Khan (1772-1776) became the ruler of Sindh, he also encouraged many Iranian scholars and poets at his court. He was greatly impressed by Iranian culture. In one of his poems, he

The Shah's horse has gained the rank of Buraq.

Death brings the Imam Husain, who was riding on Zuljinah, into the divine presence as much as the winged Buraq brought the Holy Prophet into the immediate divine presence during his night journey and ascent into heaven (Schimmel 1986).

There is another genre *munaqibain* which Panjtan (Muhammad (P.B.U.H), Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain) are praised interestingly enough, their *munaqiba* come from Sunni author Pandhi Arisar. Apart from Pandhi Arisar, many *munaqiba* both by Sunnis and Shias were written for Ali ibn Abi Talib, almost all of them praise his incomparable bravery (Schimmel 1986: 214).

The depiction of Imam Mahdi in Sindhi poetry

King Nadir Shah invaded India and Sindh in 1739 thus annexing Sindh to his empire. Sindh came under the rule of the Persian monarch. Nadir Shah took three sons of Mian Noor Muhammad, the king of Sindh, as hostage to Mashhad, Iran. His sons, who were taken to Iran, were Mian Ghulam Shah Kalhoro, Mian Muradyab Kalhoro, and Mian Atur Khan Kalhoro (Beg 1980:27). Later Mian Noor Muhammad Kalhoro sent his generals Jam Nindo, and Shaikh Ghulam Muhammad, Khairo and his court poets Muhammad Muhsin, Shia by faith, to look after his sons in Iran (Mahar 1996:406).

It is believed that Muhammad Muhsin after coming back from Iran introduced another theme of Imam Mahdi which was hitherto unknown in Persian and Sindhi poetry of Sindh. There is another school of thought that argues that it was introduced by Persian poets from Iran who accompanied Nadir Shah and some settled in Sindh. But there is no documented proof that it was introduced by

on Imam Mahdi. In one of his poems, Syed Sabit Ali Shah salutes and praises Imam Mahdi:

Welcome! The follower of Prophet Muhammad's path,
 You have the qualities of Ali
 You have the beauty of Hasan
 You are the custodian of Husain, the martyr of Karbala
 Welcome! Hazrat Imam Mahdi Welcome.

Many other poets of Kalhora period namely Mirza Murad Ali Beg composed poems on Imam Mahdi making salutations to him in his poetry. Murad Ali Beg lived during the reigns of Kalhoras and Talpurs. He died in 1837 (Beg 1984:18). However, in the 19th century during the Talpur rule, tremendous amount of poetry was composed on Imam Mahdi. The Talpurs were Shia by faith; therefore, they encouraged the poets to compose poetry on Imam Mahdi. One finds the names of several important poets who commemorated the birth of Imam Mahdi in their poetry. A Talpur period poet Mirza Hamid Ali Beg is overjoyed on the birth of the beloved Imam Mahdi which he expresses in the following piece:

In the mid of Month of Sha'ban (15th) Sahib Zaman was
 born
 His majesty Imam Mahdi was born
 The light spread in the whole universe
 Imam Mahdi was born.

Another poet of the same period composed poetry on the birth of Imam Mahdi and says that:

It is eid on 15th Sha'ban at the home of every Momin
 Because Imam Mahdi was born on this auspicious day

One finds a large number of poems composed by Talpur period poets. Even in the British period (1843-1947), one finds several poets who composed poetry on Imam Mahdi. One very famous poet of this period was Mir Abdul Hussain Sangi (1852-1924). He composed poems on the birth, and *zahoor* (appearance), and made

mentioned that the people of Isfahan could only understand and value his poetry:

The people of Sindh do not know the worth of your
 poetry, Sarfaraz!
 Take it to Isfahan where it would be duly acknowledged.

He was a very good poet and composed his poetry in Persian. He composed *marsiya*, *Rubais*, *ghazals*, *munajat* and *madah* in Persian language. When he was dethroned and imprisoned in 1776, he composed many *Rubais* (quatrains) on Imam Mahdi in the prison. In one of his *Rubais*, he called upon for the help of Imam Mahdi against the cruelty and injustice through which the world, of which he is also part, is passing.

My lord, my beloved, My Imam Mahdi, my majesty,
 How long I bear this injustice, violence and cruelty
 From the injustice, the cruelty and violence of Kings and
 their governors
 I am standing at your door seeking your help against
 them.

His son Mir Muhammad Kalhoro also composed *Rubais* on Imam Mahdi. This theme was later on taken up by a number of Sindhi poets. Sindhi poets composed poetry on Imam Mahdi by focusing on four themes 1) Birth 2) Zahoor (appearance), 3) help/assistance 4) Salam (Salutation).

The first Sindhi poet who composed poetry on Imam Mahdi was Syed Sabit Ali Shah. He first served as the court poet of Mian Sarfaraz Kalhoro and later on Mir Karam Ali Talpur. He introduced two poetic genres in Sindhi, *manqabat* and *Salam*. In the former praiseworthy verses were composed on Imam Mahdi and in the latter, Imam Mahdi was saluted in the *Salam* genre.

The poetry of Syed Sabit Ali Shah served as a springboard for several other poets who composed poetry

(1876-1970), Mirza Dost Muhammad Beg (1862-1920), Mirza Hussain Quli Beg (1865-1910), Mirza Murad Ali Beg (1862-1916), Mirza Nadir Ali Beg Nadir (1891-1940). In one of the following verses Imam Ali Beg calls upon Imam Mahdi for help:

My Lord Hazrat Sahib al Zaman help me
 Listen to the plea of the helpless
 My majesty Imam Mahdi help me
 My condition is not hidden from you

Imam Ali Beg lived in the old capital of Sindh Hyderabad. After the British conquest of Sindh, Hyderabad remained the centre of the Shia poets. He composed Salam (salutation), *marthiya/marsiya* and *qasida*. Apart from Imam Ali Beg (Laghari 1999:107), there was another contemporary poet Syed Ghulam Hyder Shah (1898-1957). He was born in Thatta and served the Talpurs of Khairpur Mirs (Beg 1984:36). He composed poems on *marisiya*, *salam* and *manqabat*. In one of his poems, he expresses that how his and other Momins' (a term used for Shias) wishes were fulfilled by Imam Mahdi:

Lord of all, made the 15 Sha'ban the auspicious day
 Offering missed prayers (qazai umari) night passed
 Before the crack of the dawn Momins wrote Areezon
 (pleas)

And everyone is elated that their wishes were fulfilled

Some of the members of the Talpur dynasty also composed poetry about Imam Mahdi. Mir Hasan Ali Khan Talpur (1824-1907), who was a son of the last ruler of Sindh Mir Naseer Khan Talpur, was born in the Hyderabad in 1824. When the British supplanted the Talpur dynasty, Mir Hasan Ali Khan Talpur was arrested along with his father and was confined to Calcutta jail in India. It is believed that during his

Salam (salutations) to Imam Mahdi in his poetry. In one of his poems, Sangi says:

My wish is to prostrate to the place/Muqam
 Where Imam Mahdi appears
 And then live in Medina!
 Where tranquility prevails

After the fall of Talpur dynasty at the hands of the British, the poets continued to compose poetry on Imam Mahdi. In this period, there were also many Sindhi poets who wrote poetry on Imam Mahdi. One such poet was Mirza Qurban Ali Beg (1887-1923) who says:

You are my Imam Ya Mahdi
 I am your slave Ya Mahdi
 Fulfill my wish

My wish is to make salutations (salams) to you Ya Mahdi

The father of Qurban Ali Beg, Mirza Qasim Ali Beg (1837-1904) was also a very famous poet who also composed poetry on Imam Mahdi. In one of his poems, he requested God, the lord of all to please make the appearance of Imam Mahdi soon so that he may rid the world of cruelty and restore peace :

Oh my lord, make the appearance of Imam Mahdi soon
 This is the prayer of everyone day and night
 So that cruelty is removed and justice is restored in the
 world

The plea is of everyone everywhere in the world day and night.

Many other Sindhi poets of British period who composed poetry on Imam Mahdi were Mirza Imam Ali Beg (1881-1955), Mirza Husain Ali Beg (1890-1915), Mirza Ali Muhammad Beg, Mirza Gul Hasan Beg, Makhdoom Pir Ghulam Rasool (1882-1941), Mirza Maddad Ali Beg (1894-1930), Bedil Rohriwaro (1814-1872) Abbas Ali Beg, Mirza Ali Nawz Beg

Perfect guide they found,
Perfect Imam Mahdi they found,
Smashed were doubts!

Now the mendicants are with their heads covered.

There is another beautiful two line verse by Janan faqir Chan on Imam Mahdi in which he expresses his condition in the following lines:

I was unclean, became clean with the blessings of Imam Mahdi

When my Majesty Imam Mahdi showed me the right path to follow

Conclusion

The theme of Imam Mahdi in Sindhi poetry was predominantly recurrent and it became a catalyst of change in converting many people to the Shia sect. This took place mainly during the Talpur period when the rulers promoted the *musha'ira* (poetic gathering/symposium) culture where the ordinary people came and listened to the eminent poets who had composed poetry on the tragedy of Karbala, the bravery of Hazrat Ali (A.S) and *Zahoor* of Imam Mahdi. The population found solace in the poetry on these themes. There was a growing interest among ordinary people to attend the poetic gatherings (*musha'iras*). Initially this was confined to the four cities with a considerable Shia inhabitants and these were Hyderabad, Sehwan, Rohri and Khairpur. The Talpur rulers promoted and encouraged the poets to compose poetry on the Imams. Later on, other centres sprang up in the other towns and cities and even in the villages. One also finds a good deal of mention of Imam Mahdi in the folk poetry of rural Sindh which unfortunately has not been documented yet. This folk poetry mostly takes place in the *maqans*. The word *maqan* in Sindhi language is referred to a sacred

confinement, he composed many *marsiya* (elegies) and *manqabat*. In one of his verses/*manqabat*, he called upon Imam Mahdi to help him:

O light of the lord help me
O knower of the secrets helps me
O lord of the sufis help me
You await to the call of Lord
O last Imam, Imam Mahdi help me

Mir Hasan Ali Khan was poet of great repute. He died in the Calcutta jail and later on his body was taken to Karbala for burial (Beg 1984:24). Besides, many other Sindhi poets continued to compose poetry in the Talpur and British periods. It still continues. There are several contemporary poets who compose poetry on Imam Mahdi namely, Mirza Kazim Ali Beg, Mir Abbas Ali Beg, Mirza Fateh Ali Beg "Shahid" and Mirza Sikander Ali Beg. The name of Janan Faqir Chan (d.1997), a Sufi poet, is also prominent. His poetry book (Haq Isbat) is full of verses on Imam Mahdi. One of his poems is rendered in the mystical style:

Followers of Imam Mahdi!
Mendicants with their heads uncovered
Wandered in the wilderness
Seeking for the master
Followers of Imam Mahdi
Uncontrolled are ascetics
They moved in loincloth everywhere
On the path of devotion!
They came across the troubles,
Followers of Imam Mahdi
They found the master
Their path then they followed
Master appeared on the 15th
Sha'ban, the auspicious day

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space with *alam* (Flag of Hazart Abbas) in the centre of the *maqan*. At these *maqans* in the rural Sindh people mostly of Shia faith hold gatherings and folk poets assemble there to compose poetry not only about Panjtan (the Holy Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H), Ali, Hasan, Husain and Fatima) but also on Imam Mahdi. Apart from their own folk poetry, they also recite the poetry of the eminent Sindhi poets. It is indispensable to note that the poetry on Imam Mahdi started in the Kalhora period (1700-1783) and reached its climax during the Talpur period (1783-1843).

Encourged by positive response from the public, the poets continued to produce poetry on Imam Mahdi in the British period also. And more importantly, it continues in the contemporary period too. We also need to document folk poetry of rural Sindh which is very simple and reflects their love and devotion to Imam Mahdi. If one happens to visit the cities of Sindh, one notices the fast growing devotion and love of rural population not only to Hazrat Ali (A.S) and his progeny but also to Imam Mahdi. If one visits the towns of Jhangara and Bajara, lying 20 km west of Sehwan City, the landscapes of towns are dotted with *alam*s which is not an old development. It's the recent phenomena that is taking place and reflects people's devotion and affection to Hazrat Ali (A.S) his descendants and Imam Mahdi.

Apart from folk poetry, urban centres in the cities of Sindh also play a very important role in keeping the religious poetry alive. Some of the families especially the Mirza family of Hyderabad and the Rizvi and Mousavi families of Rohri play a significant role in keeping alive the religious poetry.

or place of worship of *grihashtis* or householder Naths whereas the term *math* is used for the *astan* (place of worship) of the Naga Naths. But this explanation is not very convincing as there are *marhis* which were founded by the Kanphatta Jogis. Moreover, the term *math* is also used for the burial place of an ascetic. To avoid sectarian affiliation, I will be using the term *marhi* for the monastery of Veer Nath as it is locally called by the people. There are several *marhis* in many districts of Sindh, the prominent of which are: the marhi of Ratan Nath at Taung, the Jogi marhi near Islamkot, the Balakram marhi, the Dwarkanath marhi and the Jumnadas marhi in Shikarpur. A *marhi* serves as the place of worship for the Nath Jogis. The Veer Nath marhi is believed to have been founded by Veer Nath himself early in the seventeenth century. This *marhi* became the main centre for the Nath Jogis of Sindh who spread the teachings of Veer Nath. Over a period of time, this group of Nath Jogis became so powerful that they were even involved in the political decisions of the Sodha Rajputs in settling disputes among the various lineages of the tribe. Veer Nath's followers played an instrumental role in resolving the family disputes of the Sodha Rajputs of Tharparkar. Their advice was always sought by the Sodhas during times of crisis and any war in Tharparkar.

The information presented in this paper comes from interviews that were conducted with the caretaker and the disciples of Veer Nath. Some interviews were also carried out with members of the Charan, Sodha and Maganhar castes of Umarmkot, Kharerio Charan, Chhor, Pabuhar and Densi. Both, in-depth and focused interviews were undertaken to acquire knowledge about the history, role and rituals of the Veer Nath sect of Nath Jogis. At the same time, all of the *samadhis*, shrines,

Between Marhi and Math: The Temple of Veer Nath at Rato Kot

**If you want to become a yogi
then observe the tradition of the yogis
Forget adab, ikhlas, sabr,shukur, enmity and sorrows,
Inayat says you should spend every moment of your
time
buried within yourself,
When you have learned this undertaking,
then you will come nearer to Veer Nath
*Shah Inayat***

Introduction

As apparent from the above verse of Sufi poet Shah Inyat, Veer Nath was an eminent Nath Yogi. He was also the founder of the Veernathi sampraday. Veer Nath Ji Marhi near Umarmkot, once an important centre of Nath Jogis of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab and Sindh, still attracts both ascetics and common people. Veer Nath was a seventeenth-century Nath Jogi. This paper discusses the role played by Veer Nath in converting several people to "Nathism" and his disciples whose "Samadhis" are still sources of solace for the lower Hindu castes.

Before discussing the history associated with the role of Veer Nath and his disciples, it is necessary to first define the terms *marhi* and *math*. The term *marhi* refers to the centre or a monastery of the Naths. The followers of Veer Nath further define the term *marhi* as the centre

and through guru-disciple transmission (Gold 1992:37). “Nathism” has been recognized by some as a separate strand of popular Indian religions representing, perhaps, an ancient religious tradition alongside “Vaishnavism” and “Shaivism”. However, in more recent times at least, Gorakh Nath has been identified with Shiva and, since the sixteenth century, the Nath tradition (together with Shaivism) has become partially eclipsed in north India by Vaishnava devotion. Nevertheless, the Naths still remain vital today, not only through the texts and legends that they have left behind, but also within the religious communities (Gold and Gold 1984:115). Sen characterizes the Nath cult as “an esoteric yoga cult based on austere self-negation and complete control over the vital, mental and emotional functions (Sen 1960:42). But as Nath teachings spread within popular Hinduism, both, their content and mode of transmission changed. From secret instructions imparted by guru adept to select disciple, *nath* ideas passed into folklore. There, these teachings are strongly associated with the “perfection of the body” (*kaya sidhhi*) and the quest for immortality (Eliade 1973; Maheshwari 1980). Nath may be simply defined as “Master” and the Naths as “Masters’ (of yogic power)” (Vaudseville 1974:85). Most of the scholars treat the terms Nath and yogi as interchangeable when dealing with the sect and its teachings (ibid: 85-86), Many for the sake of clarity, settle upon one or the other to use when speaking of that tradition. The terms Nath and yogi are far exhausting the descriptive designation applied to Naths. Briggs discusses, “Gorathnathi,” “Darsani,” Kanphatta and Natha- all categorization of with identical or overlapping references that at times designate members of the sect(s) with which he is concerned (Briggs 1973:1-2).

temples and *marhis* that were associated with the Veernathi *Sampraday* were visited.

Temples and *dhunis* (campfires) of world-renouncers (Nath Jogis, Tyagis, Sannyasis, Baragis, Sadhus, Babas and Udhasis) exist in almost every important town and village of Sindh. At present, very few towns and villages in Sindh boast of such temples, *maths* (also called *matha*) *marhis* and *dhunis* of Hindu and Sikh ascetics. Among such temples, *marhis* and *dhunis*, the *marhi* of Veer Nath at Rato Kot, which is located about 70 km north-east of Umarmkot, is quite prominent.

As discussed earlier, the *marhi* is believed to have been established by Veer Nath himself who came from Haryana in India and first settled in Umarmkot. Veeso Sodho, the then ruler of Rato Kot, took him to his town and built a temple for him and his disciples. After his arrival in Rato Kot, the town’s name and fame spread far and wide and ascetics came from Rajasthan and other parts of India to enroll themselves as his *chelas* (disciples). Veer Nath traveled extensively to the popular pilgrimage centres of Gujarat, India, Sindh, Balochistan and he even went to perform some yogic practices at the pilgrimage centre located at Tilla Jogian which belonged to the Jogis of Jhelum, Punjab.

During the rule of the Sodhas, Rato Kot was a flourishing town where a number of temples existed. However, the temple of Veer Nath (the Veer Nath Ji Marhi) was most prominent. Veer Nath belonged to the Nath renunciatory order, with “Nath” being the rubric term that may cover any of loosely-organized associations of the Shaivite renouncers, taking Shiva as their first *Nath* or *guru*. The Naths are masters of Yogic power and, as renouncers; they are celibate ascetics whose tradition must be passed on through recruitment

(1982:103-4), the Asapuri at Nagar Thatta, Koteshwar and Pir Arre (Aari) were some of the sacred places which were associated with the Nath Jogis. However, Briggs does not mention the other sacred places that belonged to the Naths in Sindh which include the marhi of Ratan Nath at Taung, the temples of Ballpuri and Mangal Gar near Thana Bula Khan, the Dwarkanath marhi at Shikarpur, the temple of Mata at Ganjo Takar, Hyderabad and the temple of Ratan Gar at Kharerio Charan, Umarmkot.

The Naths were mentioned in several historical accounts that were written during the Kalhoru and Talpur Periods (1680-1843). The renowned Sufi, Shah Abdul Latif, who travelled to their religious places with them, mentioned the rituals that they performed there, in his poetry. Interestingly, he also discussed several of the renunciators who made pilgrimages to sacred places. The list that he provides in his poems is very long. Shah has devoted two whole *surs*, Ramkali and Khahori exclusively, to the yogis and there are also some references in other *surs* as well. Shah used several titles to refer to the yogis. Some of the names refer to the sects and sub-sects of different groups of yogis, while others are adjectives which allude to their characteristics, for example, the term '*dothi*' suggests those who eat *duth* (wild plants), *gunga* and *bora* mean mute and deaf, i.e. these yogis who have voluntarily stopped talking and listening. The titles by which he refers to yogis are: *Mahesi*, *Shivaite*, *Kanphata*, *Kancut*, *Kapar*, *Babu*, *Behari*, *Nanga*, *Adesi*, *Mavali*, *Sabri*, *Malakuti*, *Jabaruti*, *Kapat*, *Faqir*, *Khahori*, *Nuri*, *Nari*, *Dothi*, *Gunga*, *Bora*, *Sannyasi*, *Bhabhutiyya*, *Khaki*, *Rawal*, *Harkes* and *Gaudariyya* (Sayed 1988:119). This list shows the sectarian affiliation of various ascetics. The Naths of the Veernathi sect are also referred to as "Langotiyas/Nagas"

There are ten orders of ascetics (popularly known as Dasnamis) namely: Aryana, Asrama, Bharti, Giri, Parvata, Puri, Sarasvati, Sagara, Tirtha and Vana (Ghurye 1953:82). However, some scholars and oral historians believe that there are more than sixty-five sects of renunciators. Each renouncer adds his adopted name to one of these ten orders depending on the centre in which he was initiated or the teacher who initiated him (Tripathi 1978:42). It was thought that by practising severe austerities, Nath Jogis earn divine blessings and thus themselves become manifestations of divinity.

Veer Nath first settled in Umarmkot and established his *dhuni* (campfire) which is still popularly known as 'Veer Nath Ji dhuni' (the campfire of Veer Nath) where today the *samadhi* of Gunesh Gar, a patron saint of the Rebaris or Raika caste, is located. According to legend, both were renowned ascetics and an interesting religious discourse took place between them. Gunesh Gar overpowered Veer Nath during the religious discourse and Veer Nath had to leave Umarmkot for Rato Kot. Another version of the story is that later on, the Sodhas took him to Rato Kot after which he made Rato Kot his permanent abode. It was Veeso Sodho who facilitated him and is believed to have built the temple for Veer Nath, who died in 1604 A.D. The latter Sodhas also patronised the Nath temple at Rato Kot and repeatedly gave donations for the upkeep of the temple. Rato Kot became a well-known centre of the Naths Jogis and the terms 'Jogis' and 'Naths' are interchangeably used in Tharparkar.

The Nath Jogis in Sindh

The province of Sindh was considered a stronghold of the Nath Jogis and, as such, there were many sacred places of the Jogis in Sindh. According to Briggs

There is also a small shrine of Veer Nath at the temple of Pir Pithoro. The main *thalo* (platform) where he used to halt before setting out to the main pilgrimage centres in Sindh and Balochistan is located in Sabo village, which is situated one km north of Dhoro Naro in District Umarmkot. Apart from the *samadhis* of Veer Nath and his disciples, there are also two temples at Veer Nath's marhi.

The first temple belongs to Sheranwali/Durga and the other to Shiva (Fig.54). The temple of Durga is from Veer Nath's time. It is believed to have been built by Veeso Sodho where Veer Nath and his *chelas* used to practise *tapas* or *yog sadhna*. The second temple, which belongs to Shiva, was erected in 1995 by the Sonara community of New Chhor Town. The Sonaras also repaired all of the *samadhis* of the Nath Gurus. They also placed an image of Shambho Nath in the marhi of Veer Nath and the octagonal tomb was then erected above the image of Shambho Nath (Figs 55& 56).

The four *samadhis* lie under the canopies (Fig. 57). The two 'northern' canopies belong to Leel Nath and Shambho Nath. To the south of these are the *samadhis* of Veer Nath and his chela, Nirmal Nath (Fig.58).

Veer Nath's *samadhi* was built by the Hindu Sonara community of Umarmkot and two *samadhis* under the building crowned by Shikaras are situated there. The 'eastern' *samadhi* belongs to Veer Nath (as evident from the inscription) and the 'western' one belongs to his second guru, Nirmal Nathji.

Nirmal Nathji

Nirmal Nathji was the first *chela* of Veer Nath. He belonged to Sisodiya Rajputs. After the death of Veer Nath he became the guru of Nath community at Rato Kot.

by the current caretaker and the followers of Veer Nath.

The Samadhis of Veer Nath and His Disciples at Rato Kot

More than ten *samadhis* (tombs) exist in Veer Nath's *marhi*. People belonging to the Hindu faith come to pay homage to these ascetics however; the most important *samadhi* is that of Veer Nath after whom the *marhi* is named. He was believed to have extensively travelled to every 'nook and corner' of Sindh to convert other Hindus to Nathism. He even went to Multan and the famous Jogi pilgrimage centre at Tilla Jogian as narrated by his disciples who resided at Rato Kot. There are many of Veer Nath's *dhunis*, *takyas* and *thalas* (platforms) in Upper Sindh, particularly in the districts of Dadu, Jacobabad and Shikarpur, where he visited his disciples. Particular mention should be made of the Dwarkanath marhi that is associated with the Kanphata Jogis in Shikarpur where Veer Nath stayed for a longer period of time as compared to other parts of Sindh.

There is also a Veer Nath Temple near Boreri Village in Khairpur Nathan Shah Taluka, Dadu. Veer Nath also spent some time here and established his *dhuni*. Later on, his disciples erected a temple over his *dhuni*. There is also a *takya* belonging to Veer Nath that is south of the *samadhi* at Ratan Nath, two km west of Taung in Thana Baula Khan Tehsil of District Jamshoro. Veer Nath spent considerable time at this *samadhi* at Ratan Nath before visiting Hinglaj. Baba Ratan Nath lived before Veer Nath and he practised austerities in the mountainous regions of Sindh and Balochistan where there are still many places bearing his name. Baba Ratan Nath is also believed to have travelled to Tilla Jogian, Peshawar and Kabul (in Afghanistan).

Gujarat with Peepa Nathji coming from the Solanki lineage of the Rajputs. After the death of Hira Nathji, he became the Guru of the Naths at Rato Kot. Peepo Nathji made several pilgrimages to Hinglaj in Lasbela. According to a caretaker of the temple of Veer Nath, he also visited the marhi of Ratan Nath at Taung, Sindh. Peepo Nathji died in 1704 and was succeeded by Jote Nathji.

Jote Nathji

Jote Nathji was a Sisiodiya Rajput who was born into a wealthy family of Mewargam village in Rajasthan. Once, he was on his way to Hinglaj when he met the disciples of Veer Nath at Thatta. After returning from Hinglaj, Jote Nathji went to the monastery of Veer Nath where he was initiated into the Veernathi sect of 'Nathism'. It is believed that he was initiated into the Veernathi order of 'Nathism' by Hira Nathji. Jote Nathji was a very knowledgeable person and, as such, he was made the Guru of Veernathi Jogis after the death of Peepa Nathji.

Leel Nathji

Leel Nathji was also a Sisiodiya Rajput and he was born in Chitor Gad, Rajasthan. It is believed that he was initiated into the Veernathi sect by Peepa Nathji. He also made pilgrimages to Hinglaj and visited the famous monasteries of the Nath Jogis in Kutch, Punjab and Sindh. Leel Nathji died in 1770 and was succeeded by Sahaj Nathji.

In addition to those referred above, several other *chelas* of Veer Nath, namely: Shiv Nathji, Utam Nathji, Bakhat Nathji, Gulab Nathji, Sacha Nathji, Surat Nathji, Suraj Nathji, Aughar Nathji, Shanbhu Nathji and Badal

Like his master Veer Nath, he also travelled to famous Nath pilgrimage centres in Kutch, Balochistan and Punjab. He died in 1634 and was succeeded by Peero Nath.

Peero Nathji

Peero Nath was a Kachhwa Rajput who was converted by Veer Nath when the latter visited the Jaipur region in Rajasthan. He was originally a resident of Jaipur, but he left from there and accompanied his 'master' to Rato Kot in Sindh. He remained Guru of Veernathi Jogis at Rato Kot for fourteen years. He died in 1648 and was succeeded by Rupa Nathji.

Rupa Nathji

Rupa Nathji was a Waghela Rajput who was converted by Nirmal Nathji. Rupa Nathji (1648-1664) spent much of his time travelling in Tharparkar, Rajasthan and Kutch where he converted many people to 'Nathism'. Rupa Nathji is also believed to have visited the *samadhi* of Baba Ratan Nath at Taung. He died in 1664 and was buried at Rato Kot marhi.

Hira Nathji

Hira Nathji belonged to a royal family of the Jareja Rajputs of Bhuj. He is believed to have been converted by Rupa Nathji during the latter's frequent visits to Bhuj and Girnar in Kutch. Hira Nathji also converted many people to 'Nathism'. He died in 1684 AD and was succeeded by Peepa Nathji.

Peepa Nathji

Peepa Nathji was also an eminent Nath Jogi who became a disciple of Rupa Nathji when the former visited some villages that belonged to the Solanki Rajputs in

ambiance of harmony and tranquility. People hold these novice students of asceticism in very high esteem and they always try to avoid their 'curse'.

Canopies have been erected over the *samadhis* of Guru Leel Nathji and Guru Shambho Nathji. To the south of these canopies are the *samadhis* of Veer Nath and his first *chela* Nirmal Nathji. To the east of these *samadhis* are the temples of Shiva and Sheranwali. To the north and east of the temple of Durga are *samadhis* of many disciples of Veer Nath.

A *marhi* at Khyala village, in Barmer district of Rajasthan, is also affiliated with Veernathi sect. A few eminent Nath- Sahaj Nathji, Bakhat Nathji, Gulab Nathji, Suraj Nathji, Badal Nathji were buried in the *marhi* of Khyala, also known as *marhi* of Sahaj Nathji. The present Guru of the Veernathi sect lives in Khyala monastery in Rajasthan.

Conclusion

The *marhi* of Veer Nath is still the main centre of Kanphata and the Naga Jogis of Sindh. The ears of young ascetics are still pierced by the present Guru, Gorakh Nath, of the Veer Nath *marhi*. Although this *marhi* is associated with the Naga Nath, the Kanphata Jogis also affiliate themselves with the *marhi* of Veer Nath. The young Kanphata Jogis believe that one of the disciples of Shambho Nath namely, Bhoora Nath, pierced his ears and became a Kanphata Jogi. Since then, a number of Kanphata Jogis regularly visit the *marhi* of Veer Nath. After their initiation into the Veernathi Sampraday, these young ascetics always go on the pilgrimage to Hinglaj Devi. For them, to be a true 'Nath', one has to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of Hinglaj. With this, their renunciation is thus completed, otherwise it remains

Nathji, spread the ideology and thought of their mentor in Sindh, Punjab, Kutch and Rajasthan.

An annual fair is also held at Veer Nath's *marhi*. On the eve of the festival, the learned and knowledgeable people of the Hindu faith come from far-flung areas to attend the ceremonies and perform the rituals.

On this occasion, the hagiographies of both Veer Nath and his disciples are narrated by the people, predominantly eulogizing their heroic deeds and *parchas* (miracles). In order to earn the blessings of these renouncers, people belonging to the lower castes of nomadic artisans and gypsies-Dalits (as well as others) swarm the temple during the holding of such religious festivals. The prominent Dalits who attend are the Meghwars, the Kolis, the Bhils, the Kabootras, the Odhs, the Bagris, the Karias, the Barhas, the Gurguhlas, the Kuchras, the Jatias, the Gareras, the Dabgars, the Kalals, the Gawariyas, the Gandahoras and the Paviyas. They sit near the *samadhis* of the renouncers and sing the songs of praises that they have composed themselves. They also visit the *samadhis* of Oghar Nathj, Utam Shiv Nathj and Sacha Nathji in the village of Ranahoo in Khipro Tehsil of District Sanghar as these were also the disciples of Veer Nath who preached the thoughts and ideology of their mentor in every 'nook and corner' of Tharparkar and who had converted many people to the Veernathi sect. These *samadhis* are still greatly venerated by all of the castes of the Hindus. However, the Sodhas of Ranahoo hold these *samdahis* in greater reverence; they have also taken up the task of maintaining the *samadhis* in good order.

Apart from this, the temple of Veer Nath also serves as the main centre for the novice ascetics who appear to be intensely engaged in yogic practices and in creating an

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incomplete. Similarly, the current Guru of the marhi encourages his disciples to make the pilgrimage to Hinglaj as he believes that without the blessing of Devi (Hinglaj), none of his disciples can be true followers of 'Veer Nath'. Due to every Naga Nath of Veer Nath having made the pilgrimage to the shrine of Hinglaj, they (the Gurus) also expect their disciples to continue exactly the same tradition.

This marhi is also a source of solace for the people of the lower castes, who visit it regularly in the hope of the fulfillment of their wishes, which they believe will be granted to them by Veer Nath and his disciples.

clay brick structures. Sacred spaces are believed to have special properties that help infertile couples have children (O'Brien et al 2012).

Sacred objects include sacred texts, *dhoop* (incense sticks), incense stick holders, camphor, wicker baskets for keeping fresh flowers to be used in daily *pooja*, silver and brass vessels for offering food and water to the deities. Mazumdar & Mazumdar (1993) have identified three types of ritual acts specifically related to the *pooja* area. They are (a) purificatory rituals (such as bathing, wearing clean clothes), (b) preparatory rituals (picking flowers from the garden, cleaning the floor of the *pooja* area, drawing ritualized patterns) and (c) *pooja* rituals (offering flowers and fruits to the deities, lighting incense and lamps, singing hymns, chanting prayers).

Methodology

This study was conducted in Hariyar village in the district of Tharparkar. The main objective of the study was to understand the local perception about various sacred spaces and their role in the every day lives of the villagers. For this, focus and indepth interviews were conducted to get data about the various religious sites and spaces in the village. Information about space and place attachment and hierarchy of spaces also came from these interviews. All the sacred sites of the villages were visited and photographed.

Hariyar Village

Hariyar is a populated village in Mithi tehsil of Tharparkar district. It is located 22 km east of Mithi town. There are many sacred spaces in the village which play an important role in the every day lives of the

One Deity, Three Temples: A Typology of Sacred Spaces in Hariyar Village, Tharparkar

Introduction

The landscape of Hariyar village is dotted with many sacred spaces which include temples of Malhan Devi, Thans of Mauji or Rani Bhatiyani, Manbhan Varan, Gogo Chauhan, Samadhi of Kesar Puri, memorial stones of Hario Jago and Sonaras. The cults of Malhan and Mauji are widespread in Tharparkar. First, the paper will discuss typology of sacred spaces in Hariyar village and second, the temples of Malhan which are worshipped by Hindu castes of the village. There are three temples of Malhan *Devi* in the village which are erected by Jaga Rajputs and Meghwars respectively. There are also memorial stones in Hariyar Village which are a tribute to the 'unsung heroes and heroines' of Hindu mythology. This article deals with various sacred places-temples, *thans* and memorial stones of Hariyar. It also discusses a story of the fight between the Sonaras and Jagas which is still narrated by the Maganhars of Mithi town.

In recent years emotional connections to places and symbolic qualities of objects and places have received increased attention (Rapoport 1970, 1976, 1982a,b; Relph 1976; Duncan 1985; Altman & Low 1992). The sacred places may be identified by the presence of a solitary mature tree, a spring or unique geological structure rising towards the sky. The sacred spaces are marked by stone piles, hedges or sometimes

the hierarchy of sacred spaces is the *marhi* of Kesar Puri which also attracts many devotees every day and the fourth in the order are *thans* of Mauji followed by Manbhan Varan and Gogaji. The fifth category of sacred spaces includes the memorial stones of Jaga and Sonaras. All these sacred spaces constitute the pantheon of Hindu community of Hariyar.

Temples of Malhan

Before I discuss the temples of Malhan *Devi*, it is necessary to first describe her brief hagiography. As legend has it, Malhan was born in 1186 AD in Jhunagarh. Her father Bhersal Parmar was local Raja of the time. Bhersal was unhappy on her birth and managed to throw away her daughter through his servant when she was still an infant. The servant of Bhersal threw the infant Malhan into pot-kiln of Jagu Kumbhar of Janro village in Jaisalmer (India). When next morning Jagu found an alive girl in burning kiln, he pulled her out and made her his daughter, as Jagu had no children. As a grown up, one day while Malhan was playing with other girls, Raja Bhersal, passed by riding his horse. Bhersal asked the girls to give him and his horse way to go ahead easily. Malhan denied the way and blocked the horse rider's way. Bhersal on inquiry (from his servant and Jagu Kumbhar) found that Malhan was his own daughter. Then Malhan along with Jagu went to Kohra Jaisalmer and lived at home of her maternal uncle (Chandar Shaikhar). Chandar forced Malhan for marriage but she refused. Despite her refusal, Chandar fixed the marriage of Malhan. A bird (*hans*) made its way to the ground from somewhere, Malhan jumped on the back of the large bird and flew towards the sky and never returned. Jagu then built a temple in commemoration of Malhan in

villagers. From a *than* of *Devi* to a *loharti* of *jhujhar* (a deified hero) every space is venerated by the villagers. It is noted for the temples of Malhan *Devi*, memorial stones and a peculiar way of life of the villagers. The Jaga Rajputs, Mehar Rajputs, Bhils, Sami, Gurera, Meghwars, Nais (Hindus) and Kumbhars (Muslim) reside in the Hariyar village. Maher Rajputs worship Mauji/Rani Bhatiani. They have built *thans* to honour Mauji. Mauji is also known as Rani Bhatiyani. Mata Rani Bhatiyani's real name is Swarup Kanwar who was the daughter of Jogidas Bhatti, a Bhatti Rajput from Jaisalmer district. She was married to Kalyan Singh ji, a Mahecha Rathore chief from Jasol village. Today her main temple is located in Jasol village in Barmer district in Rajasthan (Bharucha 2003). Apart from Hariyar, shrines of Mauji are found in many villages of Tharparkar district. The Jaga and Meghwars worship the Malhan *Devi* who holds sway on their everyday behaviour. Both Jaga Rajputs and Meghwars have built separate temples for Malhan *Devi*.

Typology of Sacred Spaces in Hariyar

If one looks at the typology of sacred spaces in Hariyar village, the most sacred ones are the temples of Malhan *Devi*, an incarnation of Durga and his devotee Hario Jago. Inside the temple of Malhan are memorial stones of her devotees which are fixed in the the pillars and walls of the temples. These are sacred sub-spaces within a sacred space of temples which are also worshipped by the Hindu community of Hariyar and other nearby villages. These sub-spaces include the *thans* of Gogaji and Malhan (only worshipped by Meghwars) and memorial stones at Malhan Jo Khud. There are three temples of Malhan *Devi* in the villages; two were built by Rajputs and the third by Meghwar community. Third in

east of the sand dune. It is partially a broken memorial stone (Figs.66&67). Only the upper part depicting a rider on the horse is extant. Hario from whom sprang Haripota, migrated some centuries back from Janro area near Jaisalmer and settled in Mithi where he founded the village by the name of Hariyar. He was a devotee of Malhan *Devi*. The Jaga Rajputs have built a temple of Hario where his memorial stone is found. He is a *kuladeva* (family deity of Jaga Rajputs) who is invoked on a number of occasions whenever there is the birth of a child, or marriage in the family. Newly wedded couples always visit the temple of Hario to get his blessings. Likewise, newly born babies are also brought to the temple of Hario for seeking blessings. There are two shrines of Hario, first is located south of 'Lohartin Wari Bhit', where exists his memorial stone and the second at Malhan Jo Khud which was built in 2013 (Fig.68).

According to a legend Hario was a very pious person. He lived during the reign of Darabrash Sodho in Umerkot (Harijan 2005). It is believed that once drought hit some parts of Tharparkar. There was no water and grass for the cattle to drink and graze. People were migrating to barrage area. Despite of drought, the cattle of Hario were grazing and drinking water from the village pond. The village pastures were green and the ponds were full of water. People were surprised to see all this. The local people attributed this miracle to his piousness and sainthood. Apart from this miracle, the devotees of Hario also narrated many of his *parchas* (miracles) which he demonstrated from time to time¹.

The tank of Hario, where his cattle used to drink water during the drought, is located near his shrine and south of '*lohartin wari bhit*'. The tank was located

¹ Information shared by Anbhji Jago, bhopo of Malhan devi temple

village Janro, Jaisalmer. The temple still exists in Janro and is the main temple of Malhan *Devi* (Varan n.d).

The Kumbhars of Hariyar village have true respect for Malhan temple. During the wedding ceremonies in the community, it was an obligatory custom for bridegroom to visit and pay respect to Malhan *Devi* in this temple by bowing his head.

There are three temples of Malhan Devi in Hariyar village. The first temple which is also the main and oldest is located on the Mithi- Chelhar Road (Fig. 59). It was believed to have been constructed by Hario Jago. This temple is locally called Malhan- Jo- Khud. As discussed above, there are also memorial stones fixed on the pillars and walls of the temples (Figs 60-62).

Later, in 2006, it was rebuilt and renovated by Dani Rathi Krishan Kumar of Chelhar village. There is a small shrine of Malhan which was made by Meghwars of Hariyar village. They have kept wooden tablets of Malhan and fixed tridents into the floor of *than* (Fig.63). A second temple is located in Jaga Rajput ward of the village (Fig.64). A third temple is located in the Meghwar cluster of the village (Fig.65) which was erected by Meghwar community in 2004.

The devotees of Malhan in Hariyar village still follow the age old tenets and women do not wear jewellery or ornaments. Their dwellings are made of wood and hay stack. They do not use burnt or unbaked bricks while building the house. Interestingly, not a single house in the village has a gate.

Shrines of Hario

Apart from various memorial stones on sand dune, there is also a memorial stone of Hario Rajput situated

mentions her committing *sati* with her brother-in-law. It is believed that she had an affair with Sawai Singh and that's why she performed *sati* by throwing herself onto funeral pyre. Chaudhari (2009) cites the second story, in which Rani Bhatiyani has an affair and then throws herself on a funeral pyre, as the most common version of the Rani Bhatiyani narrative.

Trembath (1999) argues that this version of the story, though common and popular among the Manganiyars, is in all probability far from the truth. She provides other instances of women performing *sati* for male members of their family other than their husbands and agrees that there may have been some precedence for this account (1999: 220). However, she says that "given the strict codes of behavior" among Rajput women in Rajasthan; it would have been highly unlikely for Rani Bhatiyani to have had an "affair" with her brother-in-law.

Than of Mauji is sacred space not only for the villagers of Hariyar but also for the neighbouring villagers who visit the *than* frequently. Local Hindu community swarms the shrine during the mela which is held thrice a year.

Than of Manbhan

She was a pious lady of a Varan family from Dondar village in Nagarparkar and was married to Himath Singh Mehar of Hariyar village. She was a follower of Mauji. She was also believed to have established *than* of Mauji in Hariyar village about one-hundred years ago. Than of Manbhan is located northeast of Mauji's *than* (Fig. 71)⁴. She is worshipped by Mehar Rajputs and other communities of the village.

⁴ Information shared by Hukam Singh

between two dunes. It is called 'Hario tar marho' from where people can not cut a tree because it is prohibited (oan) by Hario².

Marhi of Kesar Puri

Apart from the temples of Malhan, the shrine of Hario Jago, *marhi* of Kesar Puri is another sacred space in the village (Fig.69). It is believed that Kesar Puri took *jivat Samadhi* (living Samadhi, buried himself alive). The *marhi* of Kesar Puri is located west of Mata's temple³. There are many *marhis* of Puri ascetics in Tharparkar. Two of his *chelas* (disciples) Ram Puri and Bhim Puri preached his thought and ideology in Tharparkar. The *samadhis* of both ascetics are located in Mahiyar villages. The *marhi* of Kesar Puri also attracts many people who do daily *dhop* at his *samadhi*.

Than of Mauji

The *than* (a small informal shrine, open-platform) containing image of a deity of Mauji is located in a Maher Rajput cluster of the village, west of the temple of Malhan *Devi* (Fig.70). There is a wooden tablet of Mauji which has been placed in *than* by his caretaker.

Mauji's real name is Rani Bhatiyani who was wife of Kalyan Singh, a Bhatti prince of Jaisalmer. She committed *sati* when she heard about Sawai Singh's (her borther- in- law) death in battle by throwing herself onto the funeral pyre. There are different variants of the narrative. In another narrative, she commits *sati* after the death of her son by fasting. But Komal Kothari, a folklorist of Rajasthan collected a narrative which

² Information given by Pritam Das Dinani, a retired school teacher

³ Information shared by Wagh Puri, shivadari of Marhi of Kesar Puri

Jaga Rajputs who attacked their wedding caravan. The wedding caravan of Umbo was heading towards Rupa Maari in Badin from Ratnagar, Rajasthan. The name of Umbo's fiancé was Son Bai⁶.

The animals were decorated with bells. As the caravan passed by village Hariyar, the sounds of the bells reached the nearby village. Jagas, the devotees of Malhan *Devi* state that Malhan had prohibited the wearing of elaborate jewellery (*Devi oan*) particularly small bells that jingle. Furthermore, Malhan had warned her devotees of the dangers of luxurious life and the importance of simple living, violation of which always brings curse (*Devi sarap*) and bad luck to a violator. Upon hearing the bells, the Jagas demanded women to take off their precious jewellery which they refused infuriating the attackers⁷. The Jaga Rajputs killed four Sonaras and one Maganhar. In the fight, bridegroom Umbo was also killed. When the news of his death reached Rupa Maari, his in-laws took his body to Rupa Maari where her fiancé tied the wedding knot with his dead body and when cremated she too became *sati*. All other women whose husbands were also killed in the fight immolated themselves with their deceased husbands.

Later, the descendants of the Sonaras erected the memorial stones in the same place where their ancestors and Maganhar fell. Their memorial stones immortalise the lives of women like a Keats' Grecian urn. There are five sati stones in the Hariyar. The names of the satis are Son Bai, Shatra Devi, Chandi Devi, Chaund Devi and Vindi Devi⁸.

⁶ Information given by Hashim Maganhar of Mithi Town

⁷ Information given by Anbhji Jago

⁸ Information shared by karo Maganhar of Mithi Town

Than of Gogo

There is a mall *than* of Gogaji at Malhan Jo Khud (Fig. 72). The Nai Hindu community of Hariyar worship Gogaji. It is also one of the sacred spaces of Hariyar village. Apart from Nai community, the other castes also venerate Gogaja when they visit the temple of Malhan *devi*⁵.

Gogaji, who is also called Goga Pir, and Zahir Pir (by Muslims), is most popular folk deity of northern India (Sikand 2003:165). The cult of snake God Gogaji is also popular among Rajput and non-Rajput castes of Tharparkar. He is worshipped in the form of snake and at his every *than* is placed an image of a snake. Gogaji cures the patients of snake bites in Tharparkar.

Sati and hero Stones

There are a number of memorial stones in Hariyar village commemorating *satis* (widow-burning) and *jhujhars* (headless heroes) (Fig.73). The memorial stones are located on a sand dune which belongs to Jaga and Sonara caste of Hindus (Figs.74&75). There are ten memorial stones, all of which are in crumbling condition due to decay.

Recently an incident of attempted theft of the stones was reported. Such incidents are not unusual since these memorial stones are stolen and sold at exorbitant prices abroad. These 'treasure hunters' have successfully stolen precious stones from every village and this criminal practice continues unabated.

The memorial stones of Sonara Hindus were erected to commemorate their heroism. Legend has it that these Sonaras and a man from Maganhar tribe were killed by

⁵ Information given by Togo Nai

healing. The therapeutic nature of sacred spaces or shrines leave three important influences in the village 1) Shrines have attracted more devotees and pilgrims in past two decades. 2) The new shrines also come up. 3) With construction of new shrines, the older shrines also get extended and reconstructed. The new shrine of Malhan was built by Meghwar community in 2004. Likewise, a new shrine of Hario Jago was also built two years ago. Now, there are two shrines of Hario Jago in the village. The old temple of Malhan Jo Khud was also reconstructed in 2006. All other shrines of Manbhan, Gogo, Kesar Puri and Mauji were reconstructed recently.

Reconstruction of the shrines is linked to popularity of place and deity, from local cult to the regional cult. A few *sati* shrines in other villages of Tharparkar, which were earlier worshipped by single caste, have now acquired multi-caste cult. Likewise, Malhan Mata, *kuldevi* of Jaga Rajput, is most popular deity of Tharparkar.

All the *sati* stones carry the similar image of *namaskar* (Fig.76). The memorial stones are divided into two parts; the upper containing the image either of *sati* or *jhujhar* and lower bearing the text that explains the probable cause of death of the *sati* or the hero.

Hero Stone of Kesro Maganhar

Sonaras also erected a memorial for Maganhar believing that he also died defending their patrons (Figs.77 and 78). This memorial stone is a testimony to the fact that the Maganhar died while serving and defending his patrons, something they took great pride in. The name of Maganhar was Kesro whose father Karo also served the Sonaras. Kesro belonged to Bahudhar lineage of the Maganhars. Bahudhars were famous musicians in Ratnagar (Baloch 2003). They served not only sonaras but also the Rajputs.

The Maganhars are an ancient caste of Sindh who in the past survived on the patronage of rulers and wealthy merchants. Maganhars are still keepers of family history of their masters. When a child is born in the family of a Sodha Rajput the Maganhars sing songs wishing the child a long life, apart from praising all members of the child's family on the auspicious occasion. They also sing of the heroic deeds of the ancestors of the Sodha Rajputs. When the Samma Rajputs' rule came to an end, some of the families of the Maganhars preferred to call themselves Sammas. Nowadays, these traditional musicians sing at the birth of a child, at marriage ceremonies and on certain other occasions. Usually, they play the *dhol* (drum). The Maganhar and the Charan castes have preserved the oral history of Tharparkar in their *chhands* (folk-poetry).

Conclusion

Sacred spaces of Hariyar are sites of psychological

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Illustrations



Fig.3 Illegally dug stone circular structure on Bapro Rek Buthi



Fig.4 Circular pit grave on Bapro Rek Buthi

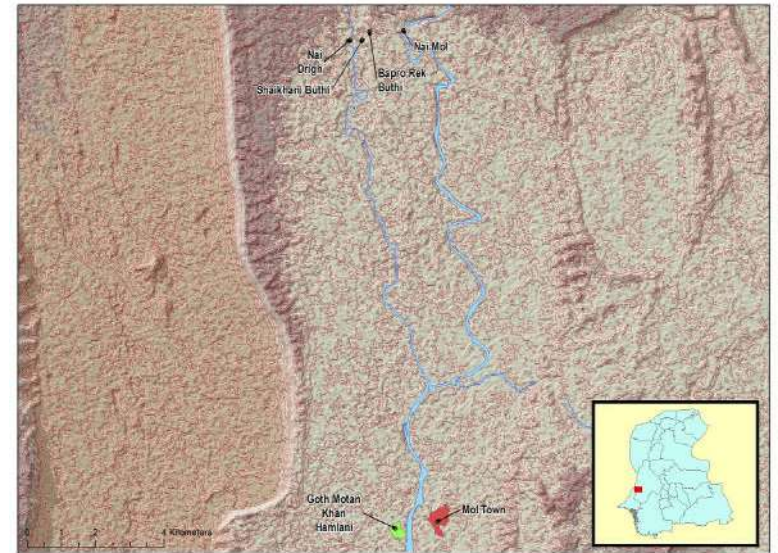


Fig.1-Map showing the sites of stone circular structures in Mol Valley, Sindh-Kohistan



Fig.2 Stone circular structures and menhirs on Bapro Rek Buthi



Fig.7 Circular pit grave on Shaikhani Buthi



Fig.8 Cup-marks on the dislodged slab of circular tomb on Shaikhani Buthi



Fig.5 Menhirs on Bapro Rek Buthi



Fig.6 Illegally dug stone circular structure on Shaikhani Buthi



Fig.11 Stone circular structure at Taung Valley



Fig.12 Stone circular structure at Rohel Ji Kund, Gaj Valley



Fig.9 Pottery vessel found from circular pit grave at Bapro Rek Buthi



Fig.10 Base of pottery vessel found from grave at Bapro Rek Buthi



Fig.15 Stone Alignment at Thohar Kanaro



Fig.16 Cairn at Thohar Kanaro



Fig.13 Stone Circle at Thohar Kanaro



Fig.14 Menhir at Thohar Kanaro



Fig.19 Wankhand Square structure



Fig.20 Wankhand Menhir



Fig.17 Stone row at Burfat Village



Fig.18 Monoliths at Khet Waro Muqam



Fig.23 Stone alignment at Melo



Fig.24 Menhir at Manhah Buthi



Fig.21 Menhir at Kand Jhang



Fig.22 Menhir at Ghaggar Phatak, Karachi



Fig.27 A view of Chaukhandi tombs in Karachi



Fig.28 Recently built tombs of Sindhi writers



Fig.25 Square structure at Rozi Band



Fig.26 Cairn Circle near Usman Shah shrine



Fig.31 The Jats invariably adorn their camels with decorative ornaments

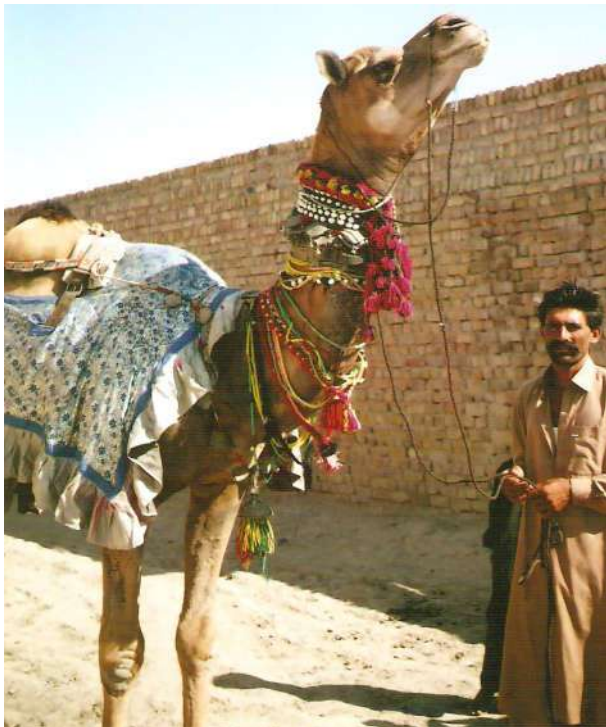


Fig.32 Camel tastefully decked out with garlands, bands and bell



Fig.29 Recently built canopy of Jam Murad Ali



Fig.30 A road to Chaukhandi tombs

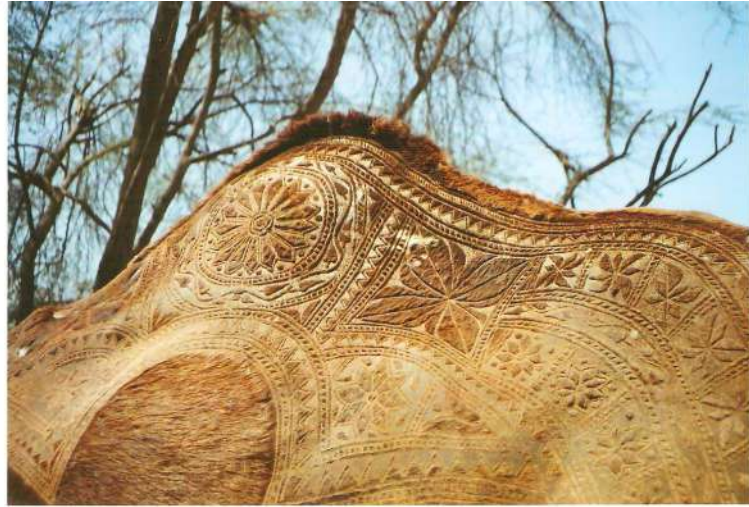


Fig.35 Camel with mesmerizing designs



Fig.36 Each of the pattern constructs and creates the identity of both owner and the artist

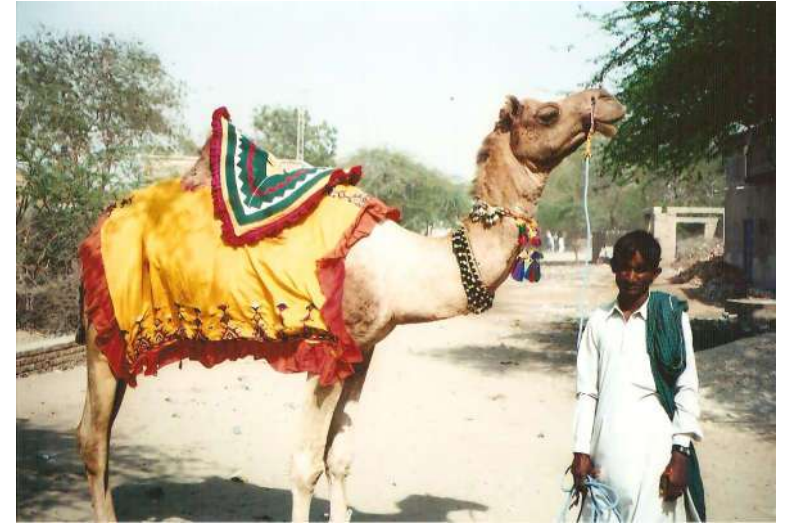


Fig.33 A camel decorated with colourful Jhull in Islamkot, Tharparkar



Fig.34 Camels decorated with headdresses and gorbands



Fig.39 Artist creating patterns on camel coat at Karachi



Fig.40 Young Jat riding on the camel



Fig.37 Patterns on a camel at Karachi



Fig.38 A camel at camel market at Karachi



Fig.43 An impressive building over Shabeeh and Zareeh of Imam Hussain at Khairpur



Fig.41 Decorated camels get more value in the market

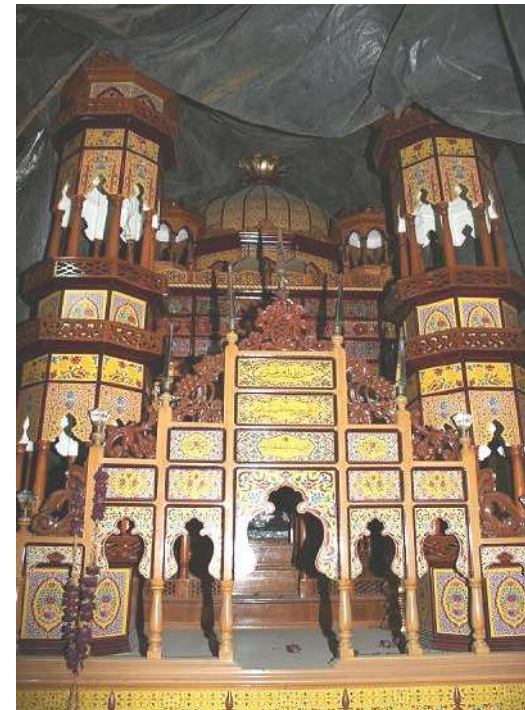


Fig.42 Shabeeh (replica) of Imam Hussain's shrine at Hyderabad, Sindh



Fig.45 Imam Ali Gate of Shabeeh and Zareeh Mubarak of Imam Hussain at Khairpur

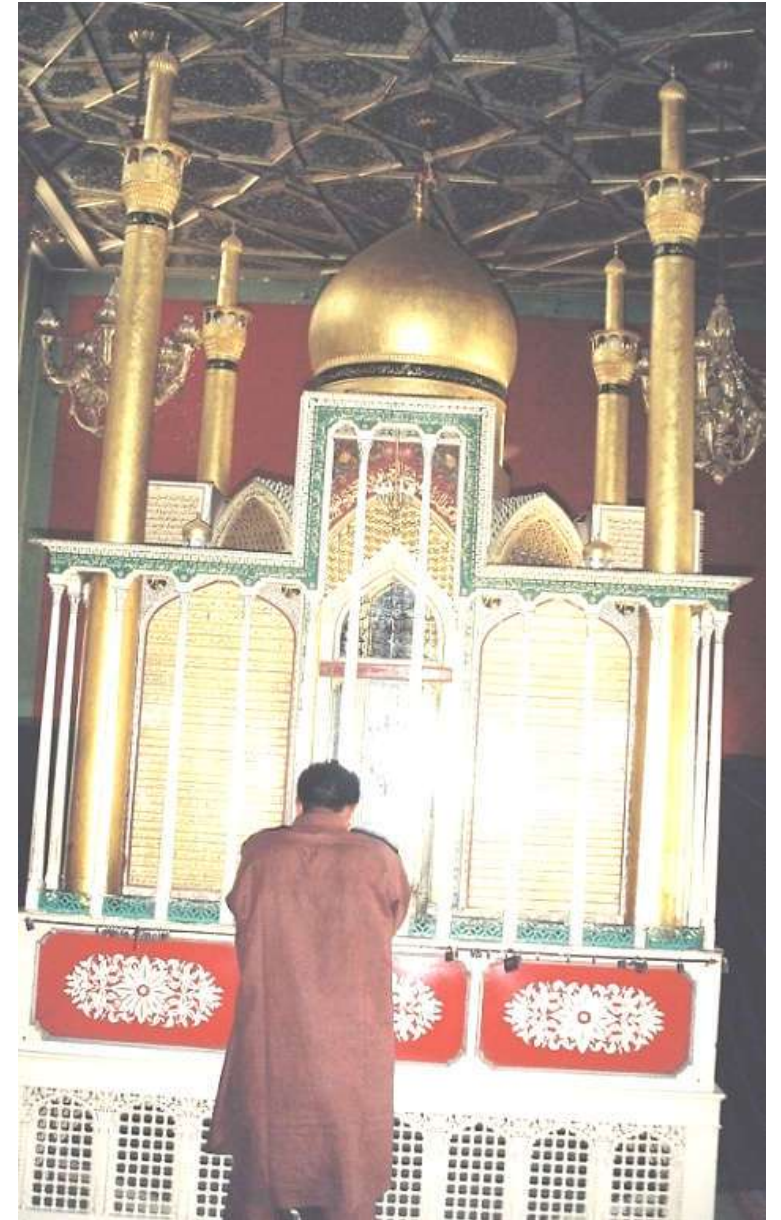


Fig.44 A devotee at the Shabeeh of Imam Hussain in Khairpur, Sindh

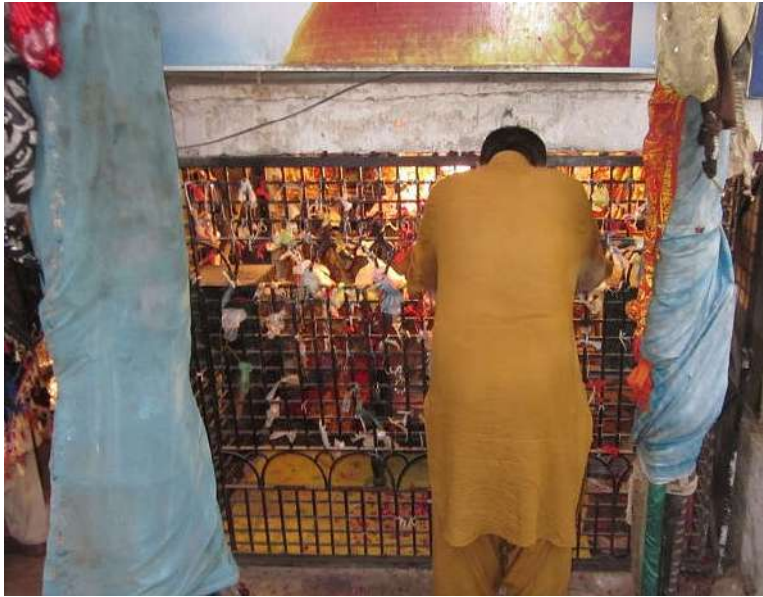


Fig.48 A devotee at Zareeh Mubarak of Hazrat Abbas Alamdar in Qadamgah Imam Ali shrine, Hyderabad



Fig.49 Jhoola (cradle) of Shahzada Ali Asghar at Qadamgah Imam Ali shrine, Hyderabad

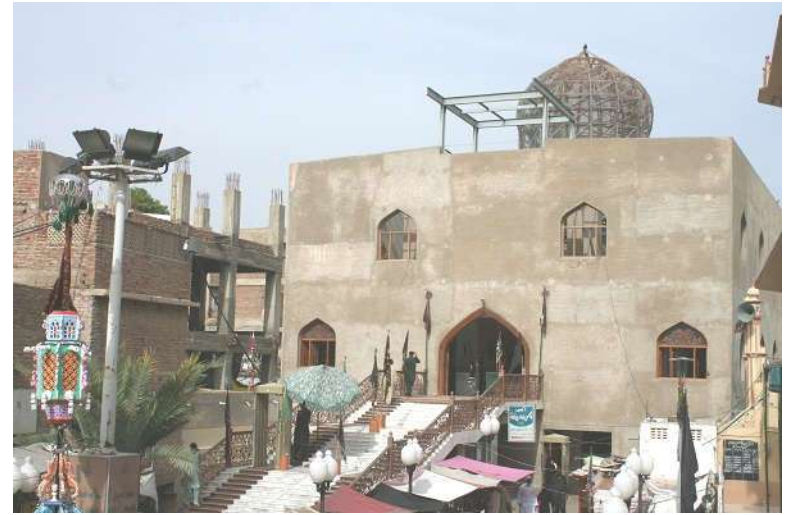


Fig.46 View of under construction shrine of footprints of Imam Ali at Hyderabad



Fig.47 Interior view of Qadamgah (footprints) Imam Ali at Hyderabad



Fig.52 Shabeeh (replica) of Imam Hussain's Roza at Kot Diji, Khairpur



Fig.53 Painting of Imam Ali's Roza in the tomb of Shadi Shaheed (built in 2007) in Khairpur



Fig.50 Jhoola (cradle) of Shahzada Ali Asghar at Shabeeh of Imam Hussain, Kot Diji, Khairpur



Fig.51 Zareeh Mubarak of Imam Hussain at Kot Diji, Khairpur



Fig.56 Image of Shambo Nath at the marhi of Veer Nath



Fig.57 Samadhis of Leel Nath, Shambho Nath, Veer Nath and Nirmal Nath



Fig.54 Temples of Durga and Shiva at the marhi of Veer Nath at Rato Kot



Fig.55 Canopy of Shambho Nath



Fig.60 Memorail stone at Malhan Jo Khud



Fig.58 Samadhis of Veer Nath (on the left) and Nirmal Nath (on the right)



Fig.59 Malhan Jo Khud rebuilt in 2006



Fig.62 Memorial stone fixed on pillar of temple



Fig.61 Another memorial stones fixed on wall of temple



Fig.65 Temple of Malhan in Meghwar cluster of Hariyar village



Fig.66 Shrine of Hario Jago



Fig.63 Wooden tablets of Malhan at Than of Malhan at Malhan Jo Khud



Fig.64 Temple of Malhan in Jaga Rajput cluster of Hariyar village



Fig.69 Marhi of Kesar Puri



Fig.67 Memorial stone of Hario Jago



Fig.68 Hario temple near Malhan temple



Fig.72 Than of Gogaji, the snake deity



Fig.73 Memorial stones of Sonaras



Fig.70 Than of Mauji



Fig.71 Than of Manbhan Varan



Fig.76 Sati stone at Hariyar village



Fig.74 A memorial stone of Jaga warrior



Fig.75 A hero stone of Sonara caste



Fig.77 Hero stone of Maganhar

Jats 13, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71,

Jamalis 42, 43, 70,

Jaisalmer 115, 116,

Jaga 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 120, 121, 122,

Kech Makran 45,

Kak Mahal 54,

Kand Jhang 29,

Kararo Muqam 24,

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